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# POOIN AGEN IT;

**And other Papers,**

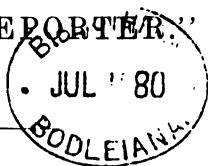
BY

**JACK BRADSHAW,**

**WATCHMAKER.**

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## INTRODUCTION.

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**T**HE papers which are reprinted in the present little volume have appeared from week to week in the *Prescot Reporter* during the latter part of 1879 and the beginning of the present year. They are written in the dialect spoken in and about Prescot and St. Helens, which differs in many respects from the dialects of Central and North Lancashire, as will be obvious to those who have any acquaintance with the works of Wagh and other Lancashire writers. The author claims no special merit for them. They have been received with considerable favour by the readers of the *Reporter*, and a desire has been expressed by many that they should appear in book form. Whether they are worthy of republication must be decided by the public, and not by

JACK BRADSHAW.

PRESCOT,

MARCH 25TH, 1880.



## THE SKETCHIST: AND BAUMER'S WIDOW.

---

I don't quite know what to think about the matter. It's putting me out a good deal. But maybe I'st feel easier if I tell you all about it, and hear what you've got to say.

I was sitting at that round table, as I've spoke about so often, twothry days since, wondering to myself what I could make up a letter about; and not finding it easy to get howd of a notion of any sort, I got to drawing faces on my finger nails with the pen, as I had had ready for about an hour, to put down on paper the notions as wouldn't come into my head. I kept getting as if it was half a notion of a good many things, but nothing seemed to come strong enough for me to get howd on it, and make a gradely start. At last I got regularly vexed, as I begun of being feart as I was spun out, and should never be able to make up another letter about anythink. And then I thowt of owd Renshay and a lot moor like him, as would be as fain to hear as I couldn't carry on any longer with thoos letters of mine, as they would be to be axed to a good spree, at somebody else's expence.



Besides, I should be so shamt, I shouldn't be able to howd my head up anywheer, when it geet known up and down, as it was sure to do, as I'd brocken down, and had nothing moor as I could write about. I thowt to mysel, if I was only sure as my writing days was o'er, I'd be off dawn to the *Reporter* office quick, and find some excuse for fawing out with the Editor, and telling him as I should write no moor for his paper. I should get the credit then of having given up the job, which would look a deal better for me, when he explained it that way in the paper, to what it would if he went and towd folks as Jack Bradshaw's newspaper days was o'er, because he'd used up all the notions as he'd ever had, and had left his head as empty as a balloon.

While I was thinking a this way, there come a knock to the door, or leastways there come somebody as knocked at the door, and when I went and opened it, who should it be, but the very chap as I was wondering whether I hadn't better go down the street, and faw out with.

"Good morning, Mr. Bradshaw," says he. "If you're not busy, I should like to have a few words with you."

Now, I should just like to remark, befoor I go any further, that though I'm always Jack Bradshaw in the paper, and on the bills as they put on the walls about the pieces as I write; I'm always Mr. Bradshaw with everybody at the printing shop. I don't like it half as much as I should, if

they'd call me Jack ; I should feel like one of theirselves then. But I've maybe not been long enough connected with them, to be put on a equality ; so that's maybe the reason as they put me off with Mr., instead of being more respectful, and calling me Jack.

However, to go on with my story, the Editor come in and sat down by the round table, alongside of me, and said he'd come to talk to me about my letters to the *Reporter*, and he fairly took the wind out of me, by saying as he "thowt they'd run about long enough now, and it was getting time to have a bit of a change."

I was quiet a minute or two, and then I thowt, here was a chance for me, to get out of the job without any fawing out at all. It appeared as if he thowt folks was getting tired of me, and I'd better dry up. It couldn't a come at a better time, I thowt, for I was dry enough, and without a notion in my head about anythink. So I said I wasn't surprised to hear him talk that way, for I believed as I'd gone on about as long as I could ; so I'd give the job up and stick to my watchmaking in future ; as I shouldn't be a bit surprised if I made a noodle of mysel, if I went on any further, when it was plain as I'd nothing moor left in me.

But I soon fond as this sort of talk didn't suit him. He'd not come to turn me off, but to twist me round a bit, and titivate me up a bit, and then set me going again.

He went on to tell me, as he was reprinting all my letters in a book, which would be published shortly with some pictures in it, and as would be sold everywher at a shilling. And as "That Kemble-street Girl," must be the last of that lot, and I must begin again with another lot, with a new name. Instead of "Jack Bradshaw's Letters," he'd like to have "Homely Sketches; by Jack Bradshaw, Watch-maker," every week, if I'd no objections.

When he'd gotten so far I fairly laughed at him.

"How the hangment," I asked, "can you have 'Homely Sketches; by Jack Bradshaw' every week, when I know no moor than the Man in the Moon what 'Homely Sketches' is? I couldn't do it, I tell you. I'm ust up as a Letter-Writer; but I'st never be ust up as a Homely Sketchist, becose I haven't it in me to make a start."

Then he went on in a quiet sort of a way, as took aw the laughing out of me, and aggryvated me above a bit, and axed me, then who was it as wrote "Scrattin'" for me, and who I'd gotten to give me "Done Up," and that "Teetotal Spree?"

I wasn't going to stand this, so I up and axed him who it was, if it wasn't me, as had put thoos letters into his own hand? and who it was, if it wasn't him, as had grumbled about my writing, and said as I should put dots on my i's, and cross my t's, and when I wrote something as I didn't

want in, as I should draw my pen o'er it, and not rub my finger o'er the ink, and blotch words as I wanted to be printed? If he thowt as I hadn't been writing thoos letters, how was it as he'd printed bills every week, as said they was wrote by Jack Bradshaw?

But he's a chap as isn't easily riled. He only said it was "Aw reet," he hadn't doubted me writing them, but if I'd written thoos letters, what did I mean by saying as I didn't know what "Homely Sketches" was?

Well, I meant what I said. I didn't know what "Homely Sketches" was. If he wanted me fort know, why didn't he tell me.

So then he says that thoos letters of mine, "Done Up," and "Scrattin'," and a lot moor, was all on them "Homely Sketches," only as I'd cawd them Letters, he'd kept cawing them Letters too. And he went on to tell me, that if I thowt it would bother me to think I was writing Sketches and not Letters, I must never think nothink about the Sketches, but must think I was writing Letters as usual, and I should find it just as easy work.

And then he got up to goo, but I tried to keep him, to tell him as I shouldn't be able to do thoos things for him, and as it would be a deal better for me to give up, when I could do so, without being shamt of my work; but he'd hear about nothing of the sort, and said as he'd had a lot of bills

printed about thoos "Homely Sketches," as would be upon the walls before the day was over, so he'd leave me at once, so as I could get on with the first of them, and let him have it in good time; and if I didn't hear to the contrary the 12th of November was the Dinners Day of the *Reporter* folks, and as I was one of the litterrary men on the paper I must howd mysel engaged for that night. And he said no moor, but bolted off, and left me, as used to be the Watchmaker and Letter-Writer, turned aw at wonst into a Watchmaker and Homely Sketchist.

There's a deal of game been made of my Letters by some folks, but I'm afraid as I'st be worse in for it naw than I was befoor. But there's this to say, and I should like evrybody, befoor they give their opinion, as to my new work, to remember it, as I wasn't born to be a Sketchist, nor I wasn't browt up to be a Sketchist, nor I didn't want to be a Sketchist, but its the Editor of this here paper as has made a Sketchist of me, whether I would or not. So if there's any fawt to be fond with my attempts in future, it'll be him as'll deserve the hard knocks, not me, as he should have had moor sense than to think of making a Sketchist of a chap as had hard work to make hissel into a Letter-Writer.

I'm just now like Dick Baumer's wife was, when Dick left her a widow, with four children, "I'm placed in that position as I

must be very careful, and do the best I can for mysel."

It won't take me very long to give the story of Dick Baumer's widow, and how she geet on without him. Dick was, like me, a watchmaker, but he was a first-rate hand, at a good branch of the trade, and he made very good wages. He wasn't a spreeing chap, nor he wasn't a fellow as ever wanted three or four gills of beer in the day time, nor I don't think as I ever heerd of his doing much smooking, ather at his work or at dinner time. He was one of thoos ruen as lived according to a kind of two-foot rule as he carried in his head. If he could a made a five pound note by stopping in his workshop half-an-hour after his usual time, he wouldn't a stopped. His limit was eight o'clock, and whether he'd finished his work, or had no work to finish, he'd stop in the shop till it went eight o'clock, and then he'd have a good wash, and brush his hair, and shave hissel, and put on his best coat and waiscoat, and walk hissel off to the King's Arms, which he always reached by half-past eight. In the room, as Dick used to sit in, there was always ready for him a little arm cheer, in the corner by the fire, wheer there was no drafts. And by this cheer, there was a spittoon of a different pattern to any other in the room, as was always by Dick's cheer, and was known, and spoken of, as his, by everybody as went to the house. Every night before Dick come, this spittoon

was filled with clean dry sawdust, and it was always the first thing he noticed when he set down, and he'd a way of spitting in it through his teeth, by way of a "How do?" to it, as soon as he'd set down. In about five minutes after he'd got in, the young woman as waited on that room, would bring him in a pint bottle of beer, and a clean long Chester pipe. Dick would pay his money, and then try whether his pipe would "draw." Then he'd charge his pipe, light it very carefully. and Dick's enjoyment of the night had begun. He'd four bottles of beer, and four charges of his pipe, from the time he'd begin, to the time he'd go home, which was always exactly at eleven; even before Bruce's Act, for closing public-houses at eleven, come up. You could a tow'd the time to a minute or two, at any part of the night, if you'd only have known which bottle, first, second, third, or fourth, he was at, by noticing how much beer he had in the bottle, and in the glass. He liked his beer to come out of the bottle with lots of froth. He said this showed it was strong, and good, and the very stuff to fatten a fellow, and keep him from gooin in a consumption. I don't know how many year Dick had followed this practice, but it was a good many. Everybody said as he'd drunk moor bottled ale than any other ten men in Prescott. And Dick said, as if the other men as come to the house, would only do as he did, stick to bottled beer, it would do them as much good as it had done him.

This, haaever, wasn't likely to make folks take to bottled ale, for ather that, or something else, had made Dick have to carry a corporation quite big enough for any new-made borro'. When he'd been any ways out of sorts, and had gone to the Club Doctor for a bottle, or a box of pills, he'd been tow'd as this bottled beer wasn't good for him, and if he kept to it, as he did, he'd bring on dropsy, or something as bad. How could *he* have dropsy, he'd say, as never swallowed a gill of water from year's end to year's end? He wasn't quite sich a ninney-hommer as to believe a tale of that sort; so he kept on with his four bottles of beer a night. After a while, he begun a noticing as his legs was getting a deal moor fat on them, as he thowt; and he was weaker on them, than he used to be, and he got so tired and done up, with sitting an hour or two on the stool by the bench, that he had to get up, and go and sit down in his wife's rocking chair, to rest hissels. His breathing was a deal shorter too, and at last he owned there must be something wrong, and he let his wife send for the doctor. When the doctor come, he told Dick as he'd the dropsy badly, and a lot of other complaints as well. But it was the dropsy as did for Dick, when the doctor said as he'd have to tap his legs to let the water out. Poor Dick told his wife as he'd never let the doctor do anything of the sort, he'd die first. And he did; for in a fortnight after the doctor had been called in, his relations



and friends was at the house at the berryin.

Dick, as I said, had always made good wages, but he'd never saved anything much. He was in two Clubs, and that was a good thing, for his wife drawd £10 out of one, and £8 out of another, to bury him with, as his relations and friends said. Indeed they seemed to think as how Dick's widow was bound to spend the whole of this money on giving Dick, what they called, a respectabul funeral, and giving Dick's relations and friends a gradely good doo, and lots to drink, after they come back from the Churchyard. A uncle of his, and two of his brothers come to talk to the widow as to what she was to do ; and who was to be axed to come to the funeral ; and how many should have gloves ; and how many should have hat bands ; and how much should be paid to the carriers ; and who should be axed to stop at the house for the rest of the day, when they got back agen ; and how much beer, and spirits, and tobacco, should be got in, and wheer from ; and whether, as she'd be in sich trouble, she'd better not give them the Club money, and let them see to laying it out, so as Dick would be sure to have a first-rate berryin, as nobody could say nothink against. The Baumers had always been berrid respectably, and folks would talk so, if Dick wasn't, as had always been sich a big man at the hotel, and had been thowt so much of by evrybody.

Haaever, Dick's widow had moor sense than a great many women has had, when

they'n found theirselves in that position, with a dead husband, and living children, and only a very few yellow sovrens between them and the workhouse. She know'd what was befoor her. If she wasted that Club money in useless expense on the berryin, and after it, she'd have, in a week or two, to apply to the parish for relief, and be clemming on an allowance of four or five shilling a week. And she'd made her mind up, as it would be showing Dick Baumer moor respect, to find out a way to keep hersel and the childer, without going on the parish, than it would be to have a lot of gloves, and hat bands, and eating, and drinkin, for a day or two, and be paupers after. So, she tow'd these relations, as a woman, in her position, had no business to spend the bit of money, as her husband had left, in eating and drinking, and sich things as hat bands. She'd bury Dick as careful as she could, and if they'd come and follow him to the grave with her, and his childer, she'd take it kind of them to do so; and if they'd stop for a cup of tea when they got back to the house, she'd take that as kind of them too, but as to ale, or spirits, or pipes and tobacco, or filling the house with a lot of folk, as cared nather for her, nor for Dick, but only for what they could get to eat and drink, she shouldn't do anythink of the sort. She'd have to be kept, and the childer would have to be kept, after the berryin was over; and to keep off the parish, she'd have to be saving, and try to get a few things about her, as she could

open her front place with, as a little shop.

So the relations went off, and made it out as Dick's widow was acting meaner than anybody, in that family, had ever acted befoor. Some of them wouldn't go to the funeral, and some would, but they was all of one mind, that it was enough to make Dick uneasy in his grave, for there to be nather gloves, nor hat bands, nor paid carriers, nor a good feed, when he was berried. But for aw that, Dick's widow stuck to the saying, as a woman in her position must be careful and striving, or hoo'd make a mess on it, and find hersel on the parish, whether hoo wanted or not. But now, everybody says how wise and proper she acted. She'd about £10 left when everything was paid. With this money she begun a selling sweets, and buttermilk, and rubbing stones, and mood, and sich like things, living as careful, and working as hard, as a woman could. And folks took notice on her, and helped her as much as they could, by getting from her anythink as she had, as they wanted. And she kept adding one thing and another to the things she sowed, till now, she's gotten a regular good stocked grocery shop, with a sign o'er the door, and is licensed to sell as many things as the biggest grocer in the place. And Dick's relations, as said she was so mean, and as was so much ashamed on her, is as proud as anythink, of folks knowing as Dick's widow is a relation of their's. But if she hadn't stuck out agen them, and saved all as she could out of that

club money, its moor than likely as she'd a been in the workhouse now, or a been slaving at washing and charring, just to keep body and soul together.

Now, if I'm to be a Sketchist, as the Editor wants me to be, I'st hev to be very careful, just like Dick's widow hed to be. Or, if I'm not, I'st, as sure as a gun, get stuck fast, and not have a single notion left, to put down on paper.

But I've managed to gain a week very nicely this time, by letting you know how I was made to be a Sketchist, and just telling you that tale about Baumer's widow. That just gives me another week to look about me, befoor trying my hand at this new game, as I have to be at, now as our Editor has made me into a Sketchist.

## LOWTON'S LAD AND THE NEW PERTIKKLE'S TEA DRINKIN.

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I'd bin tow'd as common Watchmakers wasn't expected fort goo into that room wheer theer's two tables with green baze covers, and sides as is raist above the level of the table, which they play'n billyurds on, with a red baw and two white uns, an sumtimes with a lot of baws, of every mandrous colour. But I fond aat as that wus aw nonsense, for t'other neet, as soon as I turnt aat, Joe Fawber o'ertook me, and he says,

"Wheer art goin' to, Jack?"

And I says to him,

"I don't know. When I turnt aat I thowt I'd hev hafe-an-hour's walk, as I've gotten summut to turn o'er in my mind, till I get so as I con make a grab at it, and howd it fast."

"Oh," says he, "I see wheer tha are. Tha's gotten stuck fast again, an caunt see the way to what tha mon find for next Setturday."

"That's just abaat it, Joe. Tha met a made monny a thaasand wos gesses."

"Well," says he, "just thee come along wi' me. I'm gooin' to th' billyurd room, wheer I na and agen hev a game, if there's

not to monny of thoos fost-rate players, as I'm not a match for. Tha caunt come aat o' that room, baat bein' cromful o' notions, as tha con work up baat mich trouble."

"It's aw weel enough," says I, "for theet' go theer, becose tha faather wus a gentleman at one time, wi' lots o' money, so tha's gotten th' run o' lots o' places, wheer they'd look rather quare if they seed me comin in."

"Don't talk like a foo," says he, "they'll be glad enough t'see Jack Bradshaw, I con tell thee ; so come along."

I didn't say whether I would or wouldn't. but we did turn in that direction, and I kept on till I fond mysel gooin' up some twisting stairs, and howdin' on to a iron rail. At th' top, there was a sliding door, and when Joe hed pushed this a one side, theer wus this billyurd room, lit up with I don't know ha monny gas leets, and chaps playin' at both tables ; some in their shirt sleeves, and with their hats off, an lookin as if they was doin a lot o' hard work, as they rather liked, becose it wus hard work. Th' moost on em I know'd weel enough ; an th' moost on em know'd me ; though there wasn't monny on em I wus ust to noddin to.

When we went across the room to sit dawn, I could hear my name fro two or three parts o'th' room, as though they met a bin axing one another, whether I wus gooin to make a billyurd champeun of mysel, as weel as a Letter-Writer and a

Sketchist. But I ne'er took any notice, becose one's not so safe upo' new ground. And if a chap hes to give hissels up to chaffin, it shouldn't be when he feels a bit awkart with th' company as he's in. We hedn't set long in th' room, when a lot on em had finished their game at one of the tables, and they was standing raund it, fort get their places in th' next game, when a chap, as was named Jigger, as hed bin standing along side of the table, with a stick in his hand, as hed a quare looking knob at the end on it, as he past on to everybody as cawd aat his name, says, looking at me,

"Will you hev a baw, Sir?"

"No thanky," says I, "I'd sooner watch thoos gentlemen play, than let them watch me."

There was a biggish laugh at this, as if I met a said raather a good thing, though I couldn't see it mysel. Haaever, this chap Jigger said nothink moor to me abaat hevin a baw with them, and they went on with their play.

Folks kept coming in and aat o'th' room aw the time, but there was one on em as I was moor obligated to, than I was to the rest. He set near to me, and I could hear as he liked a good tale, fro the way as he towd one or two which I pricked up my ears at, thinking as if I could only remember them gradely, I could just put em down on paper, and they'd do instead of me nithering mysel to make sumthink out of

my own head for this week. I hed heerd sumthink befoor of these tales, abaat the tricks as Lowton's Lad used to be up to, but I didn't know em as weel as this chap did as I listened to.

Na this is sumthink like what that man wus telling abaat Lowton's Lad, though I don't think as I con tell the tale as weel as he did. Haaever, I'll try.

It's a long number of years—thirty or moor, I should think—sin Lowton's Lad wus the talk of the tawn and naberhood, for the scrapes he geet into, and the carryings on as he wus up to. No sort of divvlement was to nowty or risky for him to be into. He'd a set up aw neet working aat his plans, sooner than a left any chance of one of his tricks failin.

This is one of his tricks as he played on the New Pertikklers, when they tried to keep up a preitching place here. It was Lowton's Lad as spoilt their chance, and as made um give o'er comin. They'd tekken a owd workshop, and cleant it up, and put twothry forms and cheers in it, an at one eend they'd fixt up a place aat of some owd packing cases, as did for a pulpit. A man, as they cawd a Elder, ust to come every Sunday, and preitch to abaat a dozen or two, as hed rather took up with these new notions. After some months hed past, and this little flock hed not gotten any bigger, this Elder thowt as it wouldn't be a bad notion to hev a tea drinkin, same as they hed at the chapels, becose theer was



allus a lot of men and women, and lads and wenches, as wus ready to goo to a tea drinkin wheerever it was. And he thowt as how a tea drinkin would be the very thing as would lead to a lot of folk coming to their little preitching room for their tea, and they could then let em know what a grand thing New Pertikklerism wus, and moost likely some on them would begin a coming on Sundays.

So it was agreed and arrangt as theer should be a tea drinkin on the Monday neet after the Wakes. The little flock of New Pertikklers tow'd aw their friends and acquaintances abaat it. There wasn't to be any stint in the bread and butter, and tea, and coffee, as would be supplied. Tickets for grown-up folks would be 9d., and for children 6d., no matter ha much they'd eight and drink. It wus rather a clivver trick to have the tickets 9d. and 6d., becose at the chapels, the tickets wus allus 1s. and 9d. It looked as though there must be summut good abaat these New Pertikklers, or they wouldn't a got up a tea drinkin so much chepper than anybody else. There wus abaat a hundred tickets sowd in less than a week, and when the elder walked o'er to hear ha matters was gooin on, he said as no moor must be sowd, becose they couldn't fix up tables for moor than thirty to sit dawn to at wonst.

As th' ticket money coom in, they bowt the flour, and the raysons, and other things

as they wanted, for making corrant bread, and plain bread, and wotnot.

There wasn't anybody as seemt to tek up with this notion of the New Pertikklers' tea drinkin, like Lowton's Lad did. He fond out the women as wus gooin to make the bread, and said as he'd fetch em the flour, and the burm, an anythink else as they wanted for this tea drinkin; and if they'd let him know when th' bread would be inth' tins, he'd bring raund his faather's barrow, and wheel it to th' bakehaase for em; an he axed his mother to let em hev her biler, for bilin th' waater as would be wanted; and he arrangt with three or four lads fort carry th' bilin waater an th' hot tea fro his mother's, when th' tea drinkin coom on. And, as th' wimmin said at th' time, theer was nothink as Lowton's Lad offered fort do, as he didn't do with reet good will. They wus one and aw agreed as Lowton's Lad must come to that tea drinkin without payin anythink.

So they first geet him to fetch I don't know ha mony shillings worth of flour to make into plain bread, but it was a good deal, moor than he could carry on his head, or in his arms, so he carrid it on his back, as a miller's mon would do. It was rather heivey, so when he geet as far as his faather's, he rested theer for a time. Th' day befoor he'd laid aat a penny in a lump of sawt, baat saying anythink abaat it to anybody, but the lad as he'd sent for it. This sawt he crushed and put a one side

wheer it wouldn't be sin. There was nobody in th' room wheer he rested the flour on the table, so he geet his sawt, and stript up his shirt sleeves, and then he geet handful after handful o' this sawt, and mixed it as weel as he could with the flour. Th' rest of his sawt he put away again, an after wipin the flour from his hands and arms, he geet the bag on his back and went and delivered the flour. He went for some moor flour for th' corrant bread after that, but he didn't sawt that as he'd done th' tother. He fetched a barrowful of bread tins from th' bakehaase to put th' doff in for baking, and he wus as busy as Beck's wife, with his barrow, wheeling thoos tins to th' bakehaase, as fast as thoos wimmin could fill as many tins as filled his barrow. When he'd delivert the last barrowful, he towd the woman as kept the bakehaase, as he'd bin towd by a man in th' street, as looked like one o'th' New Pertikklers, as it was a rule with them as their corrant bread should be baked as hard as it could be baked, or they wouldn't eight it; so hoo must remember.

Well, the bread was baked, and th' bakehaase woman hed remembert, for th' corrant bread was baked till it looked like black stones. Th' wimmin went to th' bakehaase woman, and made a stir abaat th' corrant bread, and Lowton's Lad went with em, and when this brazen-faced bakehaase woman, said as he'd towd her, as one of the New Pertikkler men hed said

as the corrant bread must be baked as hard as it could be baked, or the New Pertikklers wouldn't eight it, it wus lucky as he wus theer, becose he towd em aw, as he'd never said no sich thing to this lying owd bakehaase woman, and that no New Pertikkler man hed never said no sich thing to him. What th' man said to him, and what he said to her, wus that the corrant bread must be baked as *nice* as it could be baked, or the new Pertikklers wouldn't eight it. An thees wimmin believed what Lowton's Lad sed, and said as they'd let aw th' tawn know ha badly this owd bakehaase woman hed served em.

An Lowton's Lad wus as sorry as any lad could be—so these wimmin thowt—as there'd bin any mistake abaat what he'd towd the owd bakehaase woman; and he said if he wus them, he'd steep thoos loaves o' corrant bread in waater for a day, and see if that wouldn't soften em a bit, and make em better eighting, when th' tea drinkin coom on. But the wimmin thowt they'd better make th' best on em, and not be trying to mend em, feard lest they spoilt em wos than they wus. Th' loaves of plain bread wus buties. They wus just baked nicely through, as bread should be.

And at last th' afternoon coom for this New Pertikkler tea drinkin to come off. They arrangt tables for abaat thirty to sit daan at, as th' first lot, and moor than twice that number was standing in the room, and waitin aatside, till these lucky folks as hed gotten the first chance should a done.

Lowton's Lad hed that afternoon gen his mother's biler sich a scrubbin aat as it hedn't hed for years. He fairly ust up a coconut scrubber befoor he finished. When he hed finished, he filled the biler with waater from his mother's rain tub, and started a fire under it. He'd bin on the look aat sum days befoor for aw the loose railings, and pieces of wood, as he could lay his hands on, to make that fire burn nicely. And it did too; and a good hafe hour befoor any hot waater wus wanted, it wus biling away first-rate. Lowton's Lad never wus in sich a jolly state befoor. Everytime he wus left by hissel, he kept gooin to wheer that sawt wus crommed away aat of seet, and fetching a hanful, and droppin it in that bilin waater. And then he'd dance abaat that little back kitchen like as if he'd bin bewitched.

At last the wimmin come with the tea urns as the tea wus to be made in. The bilin waater wus laded into thoos tea urns on the tea with a quart can, and then they wus took into a haase, close to the room, an put befoor a fire, for the tea to brew for a time; and then when aw wus ready, the tea urns wus carrid in, and the Elder and the thirty lucky uns stood up—the others wus aw standing up befoor—to sing a grace, which they did with a good deal of sperrit and vice too; and then they set down; an Lowton's Lad, as hed left that bilin waater to look after itsel, just then climbt up a ladder, as he'd

reard agen the back wa, and looked through th' window, so as he could see ha these New Pertikklers and their new friends enjoyed theirsels together. The hot tea sent a deal of steam on to the inside of the window, but there was places as he could see through for aw that.

Lowton's Lad wusn't lung in noticing as thoos as wus standing up looked very serious, whilst thoos as wus sitting dawn at the tables looked as pleast as Punch, as the sayin is. But it took but a very short time for a very greight change to come o'er thoos faces at thoos tables. One owd woman as hed took a gradely good drink of tea befoor startin of eightin, swallowed sum on it, but the moost part on it went flying o'er the table, till it landed on th' Elder's dicky, and on its way to him, it hed spoilt a basin of sugar, and part on it hed gone into a jug of milk. Th' owd woman wus the fust to be took bad, but in less than a quarter of a minute theer wus sich a turning raund, and spitting aat, and letting the tea run aat of their maaths, and sich splutherin aat of bread and butter, as wus never sin befoor at any tea drinkin. A chap as wus standing up, waitin for his turn, an has hed bin to Dublin a time or two, sed he'd never seed a wos mess on th' boat, when folk was sasick, than there wus in that room in less than five minits. Theer wus so monny folk crowded in the room, and this tea and bread and butter begun of acting so quickly, theer wus a lot

of wimmin's dresses, and men's coats, and traasers, as took moor wipin and dryin, than thoos as ownt em ever expected.

A owd woman skrieked aat as hoo was pisoned, and a owd mon said as he was kilt, and everybody geet up and helpt to shawt and yell. And th' forms geet knocked o'er, and then th' tables went after em, and th' plates, and dishes, and basins, wus moost on em brocken; and a lot wus scawded by th' hot tea, as went flying aat o'th' tea urns, when th' tables went o'er; and in th' row as wus made, th' candles geet aat, and then as theer was nowt to be sin, but a deal to be heerd, Lowton's Lad dropt dawn that ladder like a lampleeter, and run off to that little back kitchen of his mother's, and scoped aat aw th' sawt water as wus left; and then he put a quart or two moor water in aat o'th' rain tub, and washt th' sides o'th' biler; then he scoped that waater aat, and geet twothry rags, and wiped th' bottom o'th' biler, till th' warm fire dried aw th' waater up; then he took a big can and fetched moor waater fro that rain tub, and he broke up a lot moor wood and started that fire a gooin agin as hot as he could; and then he seet himsel dawn on a little three-legged stool as wus theer, and begun a waiting pashently for thoos wimmin to come for moor hot waater.

Theer wus sich a row inside and aatside of that preitching room, that somebody went fort fetch th' constables, and twothry moor went and begun a ringin th' fire

bell. But Lowton's Lad stoppt wheer he wus, which wus raather remarkabul considerin as befoor then he'd allus bin th' fust in any row as wus gooin on.

It was above hafe-an-hour after he'd gotten his second lot of waater to bilin, befoor anybody coom to him. An then theer wus abaat hafe-a-dozen on em, beside that owd Elder, as coom running into that back kitchen as hard as they could. Lowton's Lad hed waited so lung, and th' back kitchen was so warm, that he went quite sleepy, and when they geet in, though they made a lot of naise, they hed to get howd on him and shake him, befoor he seemed to know wheer he wus. But he geet sich a lot of shaking, an th' owd Elder gen him sich a pooin by the ear, that he wusn't lung in comin too, and yellin aat,

"Be quiet, waint ye. What are ye doin that for?"

"What did yo put sawt in that bilin waater for?" shouted the owd Elder.

"What did yo put sawt in that flour for?" screamed out another.

"What did yo get that corrant bread brunt to a cinder for?" roard a third.

"Whoey says I put sawt in that waater? An whoey tells sich lies as fort say as I put sawt in that flour? An is it that owd bakehaase woman as says I brunt the corrant bread?" And Lowton's Lad look'd the very pictur of a lad as hed gotten moor good at th' Sunday Schoo, than aw th' rest of th' lads put together.



"Yo young scamp," says the Elder, gettin howd of Lowton's Lad by the jacket collar, "dun yo mean to say as there isn't sawt in that water as is in that biler theer? Say theer isn't if yo dare, yo fause-lookin imp of Satan."

Lowton's Lad burst into tears at this rough usage and strong language of the Elder's. And as he sobbed, and wiped the tears fro his face with the cuft of his jacket, he tried to say,

"That he wisht he might be blowed, and be skinned, and never hev nowt to eat nor drink agen, and never be let into that tea drinkin as they wus hevin just now at the New Pertiklers' room, if there wus a bit of sawt in that waater as wus in that theer biler."

On this the owd Elder geet up a iron spoon as wus lying abaat, and took up a spoonful of that bilin waater, an blowed an blowed at it till it wus cowl enough for him to taste it. An when he hed tasted it, he opent his eyes as wide as it wus possible, and said quietly.

"I'll be blowed!"

And then, one after another, aw thees folk as hed coom in with that owd Elder, geet a spoonful of this bilin waater, and blowed at it, till it was cowl enough to taste, and they aw on em said as they'd "be blowed."

And while this wus gooin on, Lowton's Lad kept on cryin, and makin a naise as if his hart wus breikin, but evrytime as he

wip't his eyes with his jacket cuft, he looked aat o'th' corners to see what effect this waater withaat sawt wus heving on em,

And then this owd Elder turnt raand to him, and towd him not fort cry no moor. An said as he wus sorry as he'd yust Lowton's Lad as he hed, but appeerunces hed bin agen him, though he was quite satisfied na as Lowton's Lad wus quite innocent. And they aw sed the same. But Lowton's Lad hed bin dowted, and he'd bin unjustly treated by thees folk, and he took it to hart, and couldn't give o'er blubberin when he wanted to. And then one o'th' wimmin, as hed lads of her own, put her arm raand his neck, and wiped the scawding tears fro his face with her apron, and hoo kist him, an sed as he must think no moor abaat it, as they wus aw sorry as they'd yust him bad, but they couldn't undo what hed bin done.

An then Lowton's Lad eoom to, and wus quiet, an looked as if he'd forgive evrybody; an the owd Elder, an thoos as coom with him, went off to th' preitching room; an Lowton's Lad went into the haase and geet some bread and butter, which he eat with a very satisfied look on his face, as he seet thinkin ha he'd settled that tea drinkin of the New Pertikklers.

"And," says this chap in the billyurd room, "that wus ha the New Pertikkler

religion never geet any howd of the people, becose of the row as wus kicked up at that theer tea drinkin, as Lowton's Lad spoilt with his penoth of sawt."

But this is only one o'th' tales as he towd abaat Lowton's Lad. The others 'll hev to stand o'er till next week.



## MRS. BAGSTER'S SCHOO AND LOWTON'S LAD.

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This week I'll try to tell you that tale as that chap in the billyurd room at the "Royal" was telling, abaat Mrs. Bagster's Schoo and Lowton's Lad.

Mrs. Bagster wus a very respectabul owd lady, as lived at a owd-fashioned haase, with some dozens of queer-shapt, low-seelint rooms in it. It hed bin built at monny a different time, and in as monny ways. A extra room hed bin added here and theer, just as one owner after another hed hed the whim on him. And then they'd added rooms atop of rooms, till in every part of the haase you hed to go through rooms to get to rooms, as led to other rooms, as hed rooms leading aat on them on evry side. An theer wus dark passages as lookt like little railroad tunnels, and as freetent every sarvant as Mrs. Bagster ever hed aat o' their wits at fust, an allus made em feel uncomfortabul, evry time they hed to walk along them by their-sels. An you never heerd tell of sich sellers as theer wus under Mrs. Bagster's haase. You went dawn abaat six or eight stone steps, and when you geet to the bottom, you hed to howd a candle befoor you, and walk along with your head dawn,

two double. In thoos days, when Mrs. Bagster wus livin, they yust to keep their coals, an their winter stock of potatus in thees sellers, so the sarvents hed to goo into the sellers monny a time in th' length of a day. But they never went any further than they wus liked to goo, becose theer wus some quare tales abaat what hed happent in thoos sellers in former times. It wus sed, as years and years befoor anybody wus born as wus then livin, a sarvent went dawn into thoos sellers one day and her candle went aat. Well, hoo groped and groped abaat, and fond her way through one doorway after another, but never coom across the leest bit o' dayleet, nor fond her way to thoos stone steps as hoo'd come dawn. A time or two hoo shaated as hard as ever hoo could, but hoo dursn't keep on shaatin, for it seemt as if some folks wus mockin her, and shaatin back to her fro a dozen or two places, one tekkin th' shaat up as th' tother dropt it, till th' last one seemt only fort whisper a bit of a shaat, an then th' place went as quiet as it wus dark. Hoo stood stock still to think a bit, an fort stare abaat aw raund her, fort find aat whether hoo could see anythink like leet comin in fro any side. But hoo met a bin stone blint for anythink as hoo could make aat. The wost on it wus, theer hed bin nobody abaat when hoo went dawn the sellers, so though they mist her, they didn't know wheer hoo wus, or wheer to look for her. When some coal wus wanted,

another sarvent went dawn the sellers for it, and th' one as hed lost hersel could hear th' coal bein shuffl't up, but hoo couldn't see the leet from the candle. Hoo did another shaat then, which freetent th' one as wus gettin th' coal, so as hoo tumbled o'er the coal box, and put her candle aat too, and wus so tekken too, as hoo fainted reet off at th' bottom o'th' stone steps, an when hoo coom too, hoo'd hardly strength to creep up the stone steps and find her way into th' kitchen agen, withaath bringing up ather coals or coal box. Then evrybody in th' haase heerd abaat it, and th' mester said as the naise must a coom from that sarvent as wus missin; an as they must aw get candles and goo dawn into thoos sellers, an find aat whether that sarvent wus theer or not. So they did; an they fond aat as thoos sellers wus made in aw directions, with doors as led fro one to another, as made it as bad to find yore way fro one to another, as it would be in a coal pit, as you'd never bin dawn befoor, an know'd nothink abaat. But they did find this sarvent at last, an browt her aat o' thoos sellers, but it wus sed as hoo went aat of her mind, and hed to be drest in a strait jacket aw th' rest of her days. An that sarvent as geet freetent, and tumbled o'er the coal box, hed hed anough o' that haase, an hoo packt up her clothes an marched hersel off, baat thinkin of any wages as wus due to her.

Na Mrs. Bagster, as I've sed befoor,

lived in this big, quare owd haase, wheer hoo kept a Boordin Schoo for yung ladies. At one time of her life she'd bin a lady's maid, and hed travelt abaat a good deal with her missis. Hoo'd bin to France, an Germany, an I don't know wheer beside, an it was said as hoo'd larnt to speik in aw thoos langwidges as thoos forroners jabbers in, instead of speiking gradely English. Nobody hed ever heerd her, while hoo was living at this big haase, use any sort o' talk as a Englishman couldn't understand, except when hoo'd try to talk broad Lankysher to one o'th' sarvents, and then it would a tekken a Dutchman to hev made aat what hoo was saying, hoo made sich a mess on it. But whether hoo could speik aw thoos forrin langwidges or not, hoo geet the credit o' bein able to speik em, an, bein a schoomistress, it ansert her purpose very weel. Hoo'd a dowter as helpt in teichin and managin the haase. An hoo'd a husband too, as tronned abaat, and made hissel both useful and scarce, accordin as Mrs. Bagster's humours was on her. When they geet marrid, he was the gardner at the place as Mrs. Bagster was lady's maid, an they thowt as they could both hev kept their places after bein marrid, same as befoor, but her missis didn't fancy hevin a marrid maid, even if the maid bein marrid made no difference with the maid, which it did, as Miss Bagster, as never was followed by ather brother or sister, turned up in less than a year after the weddin. An so it

coom abaas as Mrs. Bagster, as hed bin careful and saved money, made her husband give up bein gardner at that place, an they looked abaas eun for a place as they could start a Boordin Schoo at, as Mrs. Bagster sed wus the very thing for a lady like her, as hed bin in forron places, and could make aat as hoo could speik aw sorts o' ways. An they heerd tell of this big haase, as wus to be let at the time at a low rent, so they took it, and Mrs. Bagster started her select Boordin Schoo for yung ladies, an hed prospectosis printed, as towed how the yung ladies would be towed aw sorts of things, as it wus reckwisit for the quality to know aw abaas; an as each on em must come to Schoo with a silver fork and spoon, an so many sheets, an naptkins, an towels, an a lot moor things, aw to be left at the Schoo when they'd finisht their edjucation; an as the yung ladies would be towed an kept on the best of good eightin for thirty ginniss a year, paid quarterly befoorhand.

Mrs. Bagster hed sich a nice way of gammonin the mothers as coom inquiren abaas the Schoo, by tawking to em abaas forron places, an what she'd sin theer, an of the society as she'd mixed among befoor changes coom abaas as made her think of openin this select Schoo, that she geet a good payin lot of yung ladies abaas her in no time, an geet a yung woman, a French girl, as she'd know'd as a nurse in the family as she'd lived with hersel, to

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come and live with her as a Mamzel, and teich the yung ladies to speik French as soon as it wus possible, after the yung ladies hed tow't the Mamzel to speik English. An fortune wus very good to Mrs. Bagster. She know'd very little hersel, but she could put on airs when they ansert her purpose ; and she could talk very oily to mothers and fathers ; an when she fond aat as her airs an her talk wusn't gooin to make the mother of a young girl clench the bargain with her, she'd ring for Mamzel, and get her to open aat in French, while she'd pretend to do up in English what Mamzel said ; and abaat ten minutes of this sort of performance nearly allus ended with the lady givin in, an agreein to pay a quarter bevoorhand, and to sending the new scholur theer an then.

From what I've heerd, I raley don't think as Mrs. Bagster in thoos days, wus very mich different to a good monny Mrs. Bagsters as is livin na. It's my belief as theers a deal of thees fashionable Boording Schoos as is kept for both boys and girls, as hes bin started, an is kept on by folks as don't know much moor than Mrs. Bagster did. Nadays if a chap wants to start a Schoo, and tek in lads and wenches to teach them readin, ritin, an rithmatick, he'll be dropt dawn upon in no time, if he teiches thoos childer for twopence, or thrip-pence, or sixpence a week. He'll hev a Goverment Inspector thretnin what he'll do ; and a Schoo Board officer runnin after

his scholurs, and tryin to do up his Schoo, becose he hesn't gotten a Goverment Certificate. But if that same chap sets up a Boording Schoo, or even a Day Schoo, an echarges a ginney or two ginniss a quarter, then the Goverment Inspector and the Schoo Board officer hes sich respect for ginniss, they never goo near that Schoo, nor do anythink to stop folks sending their ehilder theer. An its just th' same with wimmin's Schoos. A woman as hes no Goverment Certificate, or a woman as knows nothink at aw, con start a Schoo anywheer, if hoo'll only ax a ginney or two a quarter for evry chilt; but if hoo's willin to teich childer for thrippence or fourpence a week, then the officers of the law will be dawn on her, till they break up her Schoo, an make her behave hersel. I've bin towld as its a rule of what's cawd politicle economy, as is followed, that what's worth next to nothink, mon be sowd very dear, for fear o' makin it a deal to common.

But I don't know as its for th' likes o' me to be making sich remarks as these, as looks very like as if I didn't think as these new notions as hes bin browt abaat of late years, abaat Board Schoos, and tekkin hundreds o' paunds fro th' Poor Rate to pay for Schoos and Schooin, wusn't the very wisest and best notions as hed ever coom up. I raley don't think as they're very wise notions, or if they are, theer's a deal should be done at em to make em wiser still. An edjucation hes need to do a deal



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for folk as hes to pay for it at the rate of a shilling in th' paund, whether they've childer to be edjucated or not. Haaever, that hesn't to do with Mrs. Bagster, nor with Lowton's Lad, so I'd better be gettin on with my story.

Mrs. Bagster hed bin keepin Schoo a good many years, when thees things happent as I'm gooin to tell of, an she'd saved a lot o' money, as she'd hed put aat in her own way, an in her own name. She wusn't within sayin to owd Bagster, whenever she leet him come an sit dawn in her sittin room, as she'd made the money, and she intended to have howd on it. An owd Bagster thowt like monny a man befoor him and after him hes thowt, that as he'd ne'er hev hed gumption anough to make any money for hissel, and was no match for his wife in a fawin aat do, he'd better be quiet, and let her hev her way. But he did think that as he wus gettin owder, and his wife wus gettin so mich money saved up, she met let him off a lot o' jobs as he'd done for years baat grumblin o'er em. He cleant aw th' shoes belongin to th' yung ladies evry morning; an he hed fort clean aat th' parrot cage evry week, an evry Wedensday and Setterday he hed fort wash the dog Flo, an sometimes oftener if th' dog hed happent fort get into any nast. Na owd Bagster hed bin dissatisfied abaat heving sich jobs to do for a long time, but he didn't know ha to go abaat fort get aat on em. Nobody ever sid him doin any of

these jobs, becose he'd three or four rooms of his own, as nobody ever went into but hissel, and theer he did aw his work, an as owd Bagster sed, this wus one o'th' advantages of bein in a haase with so monny rooms in it. But he didn't like thees jobs, an so one day when Mrs. Bagster wus th' better side aat, he towd her as he wus tired o' cleaning aw thoos shoes for th' young ladies evry morning, an washin that dog, an cleanin aat that parrot cage, and tronnin abaat th' place, as he hed bin doin for so long, an he should like her fort get a lad to come abaat th' place, as could do thoos jobs, and let him, that wus owd Bagster, hev a easier time of it. It wusn't a bit surprisin that Mrs. Bagster, at the fust, wouldn't hear abaat th' owd chap givin up, and their hevin a lad to do his work. But though owd Bagster hed bin a long time befoor he'd corridge to speik, after he hed spokken aat, his tongue went glib enough. An befoor he went aat o' that sittin room, he'd let Mrs. Bagster know he'd clean no moor shoes after that week, nor he'd hev nowt no moor to do with that parrot or that dog, so if hoo didn't like fort hev a lad abaat th' place, hoo must reckon of hevin thoos jobs fort do hersel, for he shouldn't.

So Mrs. Bagster hed to consent to hev a lad to do thees jobs abaat the haase, as her husband hed done so long. An she towd the sarvents to ax at the shops as they wus sent to, abaat a likely lad, as would be strong, and willin, and useful, abaat a

haase. An Mrs. Bagster hed a little crawd o' lads as coom axing for the place, an they aw on them recommended theirsels very strongly, but none on them took Mrs. Bagster's fancy like Lowton's Lad did. He hed sich a straitforrod honest way with him, that she could see in a minit as he wus a lad as could be trusted aat o' seet, an it wus hard fort say as any o'th' tothers could. So Lowton's Lad wus engaged fort come o'th' next mornin an begin his work. They hedn't towd him what time he must come, so to make sure, and not be to late, as th' six o'clock bell begun o' ringin, Lowton's Lad wus peilin away at th' knocker, at th' back door of Mrs. Bagster's haase. Th' sarvents never geet up till abaat hafe-past six, but Lowton's Lad know'd nothink abaat this, so he kept peilin away at this knocker as hard as he could. It wus a big haase as I've said, an a great monny rooms in it, but that wus a big knocker, an a very determint lad hed howd on it. He kept a gooin at it till owd Bagster, and Mrs. Bagster, and Miss Bagster, and the yung ladies, and the sarvents, wus aw on them aat of bed, and scramblin into their clothes as fast as ever they could, thinkin as th' haase wus a fire, and they'd be brunt up in their bedrooms, if they didn't get aat o' that haase in no time. It wus winter time, an theer wus hardly any leet in their rooms, so they made a quare sort of dressing on it, but they made some capital good runnin dawn thoos stairs, dark as it wus. When

th' sarvents geet dawn in their part of th' haase, th' knockin wus gooin on as merry and as hard as ever, and when they geet to th' door, theer if it wusn't Lowton's Lad, as said,

“ Good mornin ! yone bin a long time in hearin me ! ”

An the sarvents went and tow'd Mrs. Bagster as it wus the new lad as hed come to clean the shoes, as he'd thowt as they must aw a been up at their work, but couldn't hear him, and as hed bin feart he shouldn't get his work done in time. An so Mrs. Bagster an the yung ladies went back to their bedrooms, and dressed theirsels gradely. And when Mrs. Bagster coom dawn, she sent for Lowton's Lad to her sitting room, an tow'd him as he must never knock no moor at that door, till he could see leets in the haase, an would know as them sarvents wus up. An Lowton's Lad sed ha sorry he wus as he'd disturbed em so, but he'd wait at that door for hours befor he'd upset em agen as he hed done.

He did put a polish on thoos boots and shoes as belonged to Mrs. Bagster, and Miss Bagster, and thoos yung ladies. When he'd done, he fixed em aw in rows and smackt his sides, and give long whistles of satisfaction, as he'd bin able to do his work so weel. Thoos boots and shoes shint like oven doors, he'd polished em up so. An then he carried thoos boots and shoes to wheer he'd bin tow'd to put em,



and laid em dawn, quite prawd as he'd bin able to put sich a shine on em.

Poor Mrs. Bagster, haaever, wus fit fort comb Lowton's Lad's hair with a three-legged stool, when she seed as her best boots hed hed abaat as mich black-lead on em as would a cleant a oven and grate. An Miss Bagster, an th' yung ladies, wus aw on em put aat gradely for th' same reason. But when the lad wus cawd befoor Mrs. Bagster, he looked so innocent, that hoo could see at once, as he hedn't done it a purpose, but it wus one o' thoos accidents as met have happent with any new lad, let alone Lowton's Lad. So owd Bagster wus blowd up for not explainin to this new lad, as wus willin enough to be tow, the difference between blackin and blacklead, an as he mustn't use th' brushes as hed blacklead on for his boots an shoes, nor he mustn't mix up blacklead and think it would make blackin. An owd Bagster wus so particular in explainin aw thees things, that even Lowton's Lad could see as there wouldn't be any excuse for him, if he made another mistake with that black-lead.

An Mrs. Bagster thowt as how it would be better if owd Bagster wus with Lowton's Lad the first time as he washed that dog, and cleant aat that parrot cage. An Lowton's Lad said as he thowt so too, becose he never hed washt a dog, or cleant out a parrot cage. So owd Bagster instructed him, an showed him evrythink, but someha

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or other, both that parrot and that dog wus in nasty tempers, an owd Bagster geet bit by both on em, as hed never bit him befoor, though if he'd bin a bit sharper with his eyes, he met a sin a twothry movements of Lowton's Lad, as would have explaint why th' parrot and th' dog wus a bit aat o' temper. But Lowton's Lad hed a very innocent face, as owd Bagster would only have hed to look at, to be sure as the lad as ownt that face would never be up to any ugly capers.

Lowton's Lad hed a friend as run arrands for the druggist's shop, an as know'd a lot abaat the stuff as wus in thoos bottles in his mester's shop. So Lowton's Lad axed him whether he couldn't give him some-think as would make green fithers ather white, or yellow, or any other colour but green. An this lad said he thowt he could if he tried, but what must he hev for it, if he geet some stuff of that sort. So Lowton's Lad bargant with him. The druggist's lad wus to hev Lowton's Lad's penknife, when he turnt up with a bottle of stuff as would turn the colour of green fithers.

A neet or two after, Lowton's Lad parted with his penknife for a bottle of stuff as the druggist's lad sed would do the trick, he wus sure. This wus a neet as the parrot cage hed to be cleant, and Lowton's Lad wus busy at work cleanin aw the dirt aat of that cage. He allus did his work weel, though he met na an agen make a mistake, as he did with the blacklead. He wus by

hissel, an he wus curious to know whether this stuff raley would change the colour of green fithers. So he put some in a saucer, an kept waitin his chance to put some on th' parrot's tail and wings, evry na and agen, with a little brush as he hed with him. Th' parrot wus busy with twothry nuts as Lowton's Lad hed gen it, and so it took less notice of hevin its tail and wings painted, than it would a done. When he thowt he'd done anough, he sided his things, and took that parrot and cage back to their place. An as Lowton's Lad hed finished for that day, he went off whomm, whistlin as hard and as merry as he could, a tune as wus as mich thowt of in thoos days, as "My Grandfaather's Clock" is na-a-days.

The next mornin Mrs. Bagster went to the parrot cage with a piece of crust to give to her parrot, an begun a cawin aat,

"Pretty Polly! Pretty Polly!"

But the parrot insted of callin back,

"Give Polly a bit,"

As it allus hed done, when it seed any-think to eat in Mrs. Bagster's hand, stood on its perch with its head turnt back, an one eye starin at its wings and its tail, as wus no longer green, but of a dirty white colour, an like as if the fithers wus shrivelin up. An whatever Mrs. Bagster said; the parrot took no notice on her. An then she noticed Polly's tail and her wings, ha they'd changt colour; an the crust droppt aat of her fingers, an she cawd aat for Miss

Bagster, an for the yung ladies, an they aw coom, an stood raund Polly's cage, and some on em said as the parrot wus gooin to die, that wus the reason its fithers wus changin colour. Mrs. Bagster sent aat to evrybody in the tawn as kept a parrot, for em to come and see hers, and let her know whether they'd ever hed anythink like this happenin to their parrots. But nobody never hed hed a parrot as changt its colour in one neet, so Mrs. Bagster didn't know what to think abaat it. An it wus very likely becose nobody could tell ha it hed happent, as th' parrot begun a pullin aat thoos fithers as hed changt colours. Befoor neet, it hedn't a tail left, an its wings wus hafe bare, an sich a comical looking parrot nobody hed ever sin befoor. When Lowton's Lad sid it in that state, he wus tekken too, an Mrs. Bagster said it wus easy to see as he wus a lad as liked sich things reet weel, or he wouldn't a bin so put abaat, when he seed that poor parrot.

It wus the day for washin the dog Flo, an Lowton's Lad hed gotten the warm water in the big tub, an the soap, an the towels, an the dog's comb an brush, an wus aw ready to begin. But he couldn't find that dog anywheer. Nor none of em could find it. They looked through aw the rooms of that roomy haase, but though theer wus lots o' rooms as wus the very places to expect a ghost in, they couldn't find as mich as a ghost of a dog anywheer. Lowton's Lad sed as he thowt the dog

met a got into the sellers, an sed if they'd lend him a candle, he'd goo dawn and look through aw thoos sellers for that dog. But Mrs. Bagster wouldn't hev it, as she didn't think as Lowton's Lad would ever come up agen, if he wus let goo dawn thoos sellers. An she hed that dog warnt by the bellman, and offert a reward of five shillin to anybody as would bring that dog to her haase, an sed as she'd hev the constables after anybody as wus fond keepin that dog after it hed bin warnt. But that dog didn't turn up, and Mrs. Bagster wus in a awful way; an so wus Lowton's Lad. He sed he'd took so to that dog, he didn't think he could stop abaat the place if it didn't come back.

On th' Setterday neet Lowton's Lad hed finished aw his work in the haase, an' he'd bin aw the arrands as they wanted him fort goo, an he wus just standin by th' kitchen fire talkin to one o'th' sarvents. Th' kitchen door wus open, and while they wus talkin quiet they heerd somethink aatside like a tin can banging o'er th' stones, an awmost as soon as they heerd th' noise, a dog as turnt aat to be Flo, runs into th' haase as hard as ever it could, with a owd tin can teed to its tail. Th' dog didn't stop in th' kitchen, but bolted along th' passages till it fond its way into Mrs. Bagster's room, wheer it jumped up at her an freetent her, so as hoo turned reet o'er in her rockin cheer, and broke the cheer, and very near broke her back at the same time. Lowton's Lad and

the sarvents was soon in that room after the dog, and they pickt up Mrs. Bagster, and put her on th' sofa, and they geet howd o' that dog, as met a bin in a middin. it wus so nasty, and cut the string as fastent the tin can to its tail; an Lowton's Lad hed fort tek his jacket off agen, and get aat that tub and warm water, and the soap and towels, and the comb and brush, an set to work a washin that dog. An he hed fort mind that dog too, for every time as it thowt it hed a chance, it snapt at his hand, or his arm, as savage as could be. An Lowton's Lad did'nt like this dog turnin rusty on him like that, an he towd the sarvents so, and sed as he did'nt think as he should come any moor to a haase wheer th' parrot changt its colour, and th' dog coom whomm twitchelt, an covert with nast, and ready fort snap at a lad every chance. He hed'nt bin used to such things, an did'nt like em.

So Lowton's Lad never turnt up agen at Mrs. Bagster's. But some folks sed it wus becose he wus feart as Mrs. Bagster would find aat who'd twitchelt her dog, an who'd made her parrot's fithers change colour. But Mrs. Bagster never once thowt as Lowton's Lad could do anythink wrung, and wus very sorry when he wouldn't come back, not for her beggin and prayin him on him. So owd Bagster hed fort clean thoos boots and shoes, and tron abaat, till they geet another lad, as Mrs. Bagster never thowt mich of, as he looked like a lad as

would be up to aw sorts of larks if he wusn't watched. But someha or other, nothink happent to ather th' parrot or th' dog, like what hed happent to em when that Lad of Lowton's wus abaat the place.



## DANDY CUBBIN'S COORTIN, AN HA LOWTON'S LAD SPYLT IT.

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I mon na tell you the last of thoos tales as that chap in the billyurd room towld us. It wus abaat Dandy Cubbin's Coortin, an ha Lowton's Lad spylt it.

I don't know whether any on ye will remember Dandy Cubbin as he wus in thoos days. He wus prentiss to a watch fuzee maker as worked a whomm, in a little workshop abaat six feet square, as hed bin built o'er the ashpit, as wus considert the correckt thing in thoos days by evrybody, an as hesn't quite gone aat o' fashion na. Dandy wus allus little. Nobody at one time of their life hes bin to big to be spokken of as a "little babby." But Dandy wus allus so very little for his age, even when he wus only a wick owd, that evrybody took as mich notice of his bein so sma', as they would a done if he'd bin as big as that filistin, as little David kilt with a stone. When he wus twelve year owd, he hardly looked big enough for eight, an as he geet owder he growd no faster, and at eighteen, when he just measurt five feet, he stopt growin awtogether. But if he wus so little, he'd very monly ways with him too. When he wus abaat fifteen, he could smook as owd a pipe as his mester could, an it wus



quite a seet to watch him go to his work in a mornin, with a little short clay pipe in his maath, his hands in his traaser's pockets under his brat, an his cap a bit a one side, to give him a divvle-me-care look. Like aw th' tother watchmakers in thoos days, after he'd swallowt his dinner, he allus turnt aat fort hev his smook along with th' men, at one street corner or another. He'd hed a job fort get his foot in amung em, but he'd plenty o' cheek, and lip too, for that matter, though he wus so sma', so by degrees th' men hed coom to let him stand amung em, and make one in their talk. He wus sich a little chap, there'd a bin no credit in threshin him; an as he could smook for a hour withaat tekkin th' pipe aat of his maath, spittin through his teeth when he wanted fort spit, theer wus no doin by him as they would a done by any other lad, hev boxt his ears, and then hev helpt him along the street from beheend. A lad as could smook like that, made em show him some respect whether they would or not. An so, little as he wus, Dandy fixt hissels alongside of th' biggest in th' lot, an gin em his opinion abaath anythink as they wus talkin abaath, just as he'd a done if he'd bin a giant, an hed lived as lung as Methusaloo.

An it wusn't only in smookin as he wus clivver. He wus acknowledged to be th' best step dancer in th' tawn or country raund. Evry Setterday neet he wus to be fond at th' "Smilin Pig" public-haase, wheer they'd

a fiddler as played for th' step dancers as yust to meet theer. That fiddler was clivver at his work, but it didn't matter ha fast he went, thoos legs o' Dandy Cubbin's could keep up with him, and keep in time too. Haaever little a chap he wus aw wick, he wus allus looked on as a big chap in th' way of dancin at th' "Smilin Pig," an other places. He could dance for hafe-an-hour, and never let his pipe goo aat durin aw th' time, and that wus what none of th' chaps as tried t'come up to him could ever manidge. An he'd tip up a glass of ale as ready as any on em, when he'd finished a dance and seet dawn. Theer wus a lot of chaps as liked his dancin, as wus allus willin fort stand him a gill, so if he hed fort find his own bacco, his ale cost him nowt.

Na it met a bin thowt as Dandy Cubbin's bein sich a little un, would a bin agen his chances, if he ever lived to hev th' notion, of gooin with a wench. Yung wimmen generally, when they tekken up with a yung mon, like fort hev one as is monly lookin, an with some show of wisker. Na Dandy hed nather one advantage nor th' tother. But for aw that, theer wus moor than one wench in th' tawn as turnt her eyes after Dandy as he went along the street. If he wus little, and looked as if a good strappin wench could a carrit him in her arms like a chilt, they'd only fort watch th' way as he walked along th' street with thoos hands of his in his traasers pockets, an that cap of his stuck a one side of his

head, an that little black pipe of his, as wus so short that the smook from th' bacco curlt up under his very nose, for em to see that it didn't need lung legs, an arms, an a big staut body, fort make a mon. Theer wus the mon in Dandy. It wus only that the mon hed bin put off with the body of a lad. But even sich a misfortin as that couldn't keep Dandy dawn, nor even for a minit make his notions of hissel any less than they would a bin, if he'd measurt six feet insted of five. An a fellow hevin a capital good notion of hissel, very often makes other folks, whether they wanten to or not, to tek him up at a very fair price; a deel moor than they'd a thowt of, if he'd hed no consate of hissel. An then the wenches in the place hed sin or heerd ha Dandy stood at the corners at dinner time and tea time, an smooked his pipe, and jint in th' argaments as th' men hed, when theer wusnt another yung chap of his age, to say nowt of his size, as would a bin let stand theer for two minits' baat bein dropt on for his impidence. What hed size to do with a yung chap as hed managt that mich. If yo reckont anythink of size, why it would a gone to show that if Dandy hed bin a ordinary siz't lad, he'd by that time hev workt his way ather to a Member o' Parliament, or a officer in the army, or summut as greit. An then just tek into account his dancin, ha that would act on th' wenches. Dozens o' sarvent wenches when they'd bin aat gooin arrands on a

Setturday neet, hed crope into th' lobby of th' "Smilin Pig," and lookt in at th' door of th' room as Dandy wus dancin in. He met be, an he wus, a little un, but thoos wenches never thowt abaast that, as they watched his legs gooin like winkin, to th' saand of that fiddle, an that fiddler swettin like a bull to find music fast enough for him. Tek him awtogether he hedn't lost mich by bein sich a little un. If he'd hed no cheek, an not bin able fort say a word for hissels, when he'd bin snap't at, then he'd never a bin of no accaunt whatever. Evrybody'd a bin dawn on him, and a chucked him a one side, whenever they'd moor of a fancy for th' bit o' room he took up, than for his company. It wus Dandy's bantum blood as sav't him fro bein seet upon by evrybody, an as helpt him to evrythink as he seet his mind on. He could stick up to folk, just as weel as he'd a done, if he'd bin able to tek off his jacket an box th' biggest chap in th' tawn. An someha if a chap is a very little un, if he's a good sperrit in him, he con work his way, an he's moor gen way to, than monny a big un, as is fat, an fussocky, an funky.

The fact was, though it wusn't known to him, theer wus lots o' wenches in the tawn as would very gladly a begun a walkin aat with Dandy. Theer wus quite a lot of em as he'd stop and talk a bit of chaff to in th' street, but he wus quite eighteen befoor he ever walkt th' length o' two shop fronts with any on em. But it coom o'er him

one neet quite unawares. He wus walkin along the street, smookin as usual, when he met with a wench as he'd often hed a bit of chat with in th' street. Her faather's name wus Mather, and her fost name wus Martha, but as theer wus three or four yung wimmin in th' street hoo lived in, as hed bin christent Martha, same as hoo hed, they allus cawd her Mather's Martha. When thees two met, th' yung woman spoke fost, an sed,

"Hello! wheer art gooin?"

"Nowheer perticklar, only fort hev a smook."

"Tha caunt be gooin fort hev a smook, becose tha'rt smookin awready. So tha hesn't ansert me yet."

"Well, ne'er mind wheer I'm gooin. Wheer art tha gooin to?"

"Wouldt' like t'know?"

"A should," said Dandy, "becose if tha'll tell me, I'll goo with thee, ift'll let me."

"Well then come on," said Mather's Martha, "tha may goo too."

"Well, but wheer art gooin?" axed Dandy, befoor he made a step forrod.

"Ha do I know wheer I'st get to befoor I get back? Art comin, or art gooin t'hev that smook as tha sed tha wus gooin t'hev?"

Somethink coom to Dandy that very minit as towd him if he went with Mather's Martha his coortin days would a startit. But as he lookt up at her face, he thowt to hissels, if it hed to come to that he met goo

further, and come not so weel off as he would with this wench, as hed kind o' chal-lengt him to goo with her. So tekkin his pipe aat of his maath, an knockin th' ashes aat of it, he said,

“ Well, let's goo ! ”

And they walked dawn th' street together in th' direction Mather's Martha wus gooin when Dandy met her.

To thoos wastrils o' the world, owd batchelors, it'll seem strange and moost un-accauntabel, that thoos two, Dandy and Mather's Martha, hedn't walkt five yards alongside o' one another, befoor a greiter change coom o'er em both, than they'd ever knowd on befoor. Befoor Dandy said, “ Well, let's goo,” there'd never bin ather mon, woman, or chilt, in the tawn, as Dandy couldn't a looked strait in th' face baat winkin his eyes, or turnin em a one side. But when he took thoos fost strides with her, it made him dither aw o'er, when he thowt to hissels, as “ he'd begun a walkin his woman aat.” He couldn't a turnt his head strait to her, an a spoke to her in his owd way, if he'd knowd that if he didn't, he must nather smook nor dance a step dance agen as lung as he lived. That tung of his hed allus bin as ready as a woman's befoor then. But na it met a bin fastent in his maath with a iron bolt. An Mather's Martha wusn't any different. Hoo walkt along with her head turnt away fro Dandy. Na as they hed begun a walkin

aat together, it maybe wusn't her place fort start th' tawkin. They coom i'th' front of a grocer's window, an i'th' state they wus in, they couldn't a bin walkin fast, an Dandy thowt as she wus stoppin to look at th' things in th' window, an hoo thowt Dandy wanted fort stop, an so they both stopt and star'd in th' window, but said nowt. An folk past em, an star'd at em, an both on em knowd as weel as if evrybody as past hed shaated it aat, as they wus aw tekkin notiss as Dandy an Mather's Martha wus walkin aat together. But when they'd stopt at that window till they couldn't a tow'd corraants fro oranges, nor tins o' biskits fro cheeses, Dandy's tung geet a bit lose, an he sed, lookin th' tother road, "Let's goo a bit further." An Dandy an Mather's Martha walkt on, and in a bit they crost the street an geet into one wheer theer wus no shops, and they walkt through that into another wheer the haases wusn't so thick, and they kept gooin on, till they geet into th' lane wheer theer wus no haases at aw; an then a owd batchelor would say, they'd be sure to find their tungs, and hev a deal to say to one another. But that owd batchelor would only say so becose o' being a reglar ignoramus in sich matters. In th' street wheer theer wus lots o' folk passin, they felt so shamt o' being sin, that they didn't know ha to stand, or walk, or look at one another, becose evrybody could see em, an would know as they wus together. An in the lane wheer nobody could

see em, or hear what they said, they wus twice as bad, and walkt along as quiet and freetent as if there met a bin a thaasand ghosts and boggarts in evry bush and tree as they past. Dandy tried his very best to get that tung of his to be at its owd game. But if it hed hed a stroke it couldn't a bin o' less use to him. They walkt on, an on, an on, till Mather's Martha felt sure hoo'd be kilt by her faather when hoo geet whomm, for being aat so late. But if hoo hedn't hed th' leest daat abaas bein kilt, hoo couldn't hev opent her maath to hev towed Dandy as they'd better turn back. Dandy hissel geet freetent at th' length o'th way they'd gone, and tried as hard as he could fort say as maybe they'd better turn raand, though whether he'd ever a sed anythink or not 'll never be known, becose though they'd nather on em hed th' leest thowt abaas it, they'd bin walkin along a lane as just took em raund an raund, an browt em back near to wheer they'd started fro after they'd left th' haases. An then both on em geet bothert with thinkin abaas wheer they should part. Dandy hedn't corridge fort think abaas tekkin his woman to wheer hoo lived. An Mather's Martha felt as if hoo should drop into th' graund, if he didn't leave her befoor they geet to th' street hoo lived in. Just befoor they geet to th' corner on it, they could see three or four folk comin along as would meet em if they kept on, an this browt em too. An Dandy sed,



"Well, Martha, good neet. I'st see thee again."

An Mather's Martha sed,

"Well, Dandy, good neet. I hope so,"

And so thoos two yung folk wus engag't to one another, as mon and woman, baat hevin spokken twenty words of aw th' time they'd bin a walkin aat that neet.

Dandy hed bin so flustert when he wus leavin Mather's Martha, that he never thowt of axin her whether hoo'd be aat the neet after. An when neet coom he didn't know what fort do. If hoo wus comin aat to meet him, he ow't to be somewheer abaat fort meet her. So abaat th' same time as he'd dropt on to her befoor, he walkt along the street as he'd met her in the neet befoor. He walkt up that street, an dawn it, monny a time, gettin moor sheepish in his looks an his noshuns evry minit. When he startet, he wus in sich a state of frustra-shun, he never thowt o' leeting his pipe. But lung befoor he'd finisht walkin up and dawn that street, he'd gotten so narvus, an gotten so aw of a tremble, he couldn't a fillt his pipe with bacco, an leeted it, for th' world.

An Mather's Martha wus just wantin fort meet Dandy, as mich as he wanted fort meet her, only as true love hes fort be followt through crookit ways, summut made Mather's Martha think, as Dandy would be th' moost likely to be fond in th' street as they left one another in, the neet befoor. So that wus wheer hoo wus walkin up and

dawn, while Dandy was doin th' miserabel in another street.

Na Lowton's Lad was one o'th' folk as hed sin Dandy an Mather's Martha walkin dawn that street the neet befoor. He'd notist th' ways o' yung coorters befoor, and he could see ha th' land lay at wonse. But fort make sure, he'd followt em a good piece, till they geet past the haases, an geet into th' lane, an by that time he was quite sure as they both intended fort keep company. When he seed Dandy the neet after, walking up and dawn that street, withaath his pipe in his maath, he know'd weel enough that Dandy was hopin and prayin as Mather's Martha would turn up. But it was nowt but his good luck as made him fort walk along the streets till he coom across Mather's Martha, lookin as dawn in the maath as Dandy hissel. He seed ha it was at wonst. They was looking for one another in th' wrung places. Should he put Mather's Martha on Dandy's track? Or should he run off an let Dandy know wheer his yung woman was? He wusn't lung in makin up his mind, but ha it was made up 'll be sin. Gooin up to Martha, he says,

"Martha, I sid Dandy Cubbin abaat hafe-an-hour sin. He was gooin to th' Hole-i'th'-Wa, an he axed me, if I sid thee, fort say tha must goo in that direction, an he'd be sure t'meet thee."

"I don't beleev as Dandy's ever spokken to thee abaat me," said Martha.

"Oh! tha dusn't need t'beleev me, Martha. Only I seed thee and him walkin aat last neet, and I wus riggin him abaat it, so, seein as I know'd ha it wus between o', as he wus likt fort goo to th' Hole-i'th'-Wa, he just axt me fort look aat for thee, and tell thee abaat it. But tha dusn't need fort beleev me Martha, ift' dusn't want."

An with that Lowton's Lad walkt slowly away. But he kept Mather's Martha in seet, till he sid her gooin off, just as he expected, in th' direction of th' Hole-i'th'-Wa. And then he run off to wheer he'd sin Dandy dooin his miserabel walk up and dawn th' street. He wus aat a breath when he coom up to Dandy, and sed,

"Dandy, I'm gradely sorry as I forgeet to tell thee just na, what Mather's Martha tow'd me this afternoon, becose I know thar lookin aat for her, for I sid yo together last neet, an I wus plaigin her abaat thee. Hoo's hed fort goo to her Uncle Tummas's. He lives on th' turnpike road, abaat two mile off, an I tow'd her as I'd look aat for thee, an let thee know, so as tha could goo an fotch her whomin. Tha dusn't needt' be freetent o' gooin to th' haase, becose Martha as good as tow'd me, as hoo should let em know as yo'd begun a gooin t'gether."

Dandy Cabbins wus in love, or he wouldn't a bin tekkin in by anythink as Lowton's Lad could a sed to him; but bein in love, he wusn't as wide awake as he owt a bin, an so he swallowt that tale, baat hevin any notion as Lowton's Lad wus tryin t'make a

foo on him. An he walkt off as fast as his legs would carry him, becose it wus gettin late, and if Mather's Martha hed started fort come whomm, he'd hev so mich less of her company. An he'd bin thinkin aw day as he shouldn't be so tung-teed, th' next time as he geet alungside of Mather's Martha. He sid nothink on her as he walkt alung the road, and when he geet to th' haase as her Uncle Tummas lived at, he could hear a deal of laughing gooin on inside, an someha this revivt his corridge, as hed bin leavin him fast for th' last quarter-of-a-mile. So withaht stoppin fort think whether he should or not, he went up to th' door quite bowd and knockt. Th' Uncle Tummas coom to th' door, and seein a lad, as he thowt, sed,

"Na then."

"Is Martha here?" axt Dandy.

"Martha?" said Uncle Tummas, "Whoey's Martha?"

"Why," said Dandy, beginnin t'feel a bit unasy, "Mather's Martha."

"Mather's Martha! An wust fort caw here, lad, for hert tek thee whomm."

This wus raather a staggerer to Dandy, and nearly took both his corridge and his breeth away. But he manidged fort say,

"I thowt Mather's Martha hed tow'd ye as we'd begun a gooin t'gether."

Uncle Tummas's breeth went then, when he heerd as this little chap at th' door wus Mather's Martha's mon. So he axt him fort come in and show hissels, as it wus so

dark aatside, an he wus sich a little un, theer wus no seein him, wheer he wus. So Dandy went inside, an felt very mich aat o'sorts as Uncle Tummas tow'd his wife, an some moor folk as wus theer, as that was Mather's Martha's yung mon.

An they axt him ha long he'd bin gooin with Martha; an when he tow'd em as he'd only bin with her th' neet befoor, they bost aat a laffin, an sed as Mather's Martha desarvt what hoo wusn't likely fort get for letting a little chap like him come aw that way after her, an never fort turn up hersel. If hoo wanted fort make a foo of anybody, hoo should a tried it on with somebody as wouldn't a bin to little t'be sent whomm by hissel, at that time o'th neet. But Uncle Tummas sed he'd see him a piece o'th road back, till he geet through th' trees an nearer to th' tawn, when he wouldn't feel so freetent.

It wus no good o' Dandy sayin he wusn't freetent, an would goo by hissel. They aw sed it would be a shame fort let him, a lad of his size, t'go aw that way along th' dark road by hissel, at a time o'th' neet when he owt a bin in bed an hour sin. An so Uncle Tummas went with him, fort tek care on him, an he gin Dandy his opinion that Mather's Martha hed made a foo on him; an very likely by that time hoo'd a tow'd th' moost folk as hoo knowd aw abaat it; and if he wus Dandy, he'd tek moor care on hissel than let anybody's wench send him up an dawn th' country on a foo's arrand. "But,"

sed he, reatchin dawn and puttin his hand on Dandy's shooder, "I've no daat tha'll hev moor sense when t' gets a bit bigger an owder." An just aatside o'th' tawn he left Dandy fort find his way whomm by hissel.

Mather's Martha hedn't hed quite sich a bad time on it as Dandy hed hed. Hoo'd walkt on as far as th' Hole-i'th'-Wa withaat seein him, and hoo'd walkt slowly back baat his o'er tekkin her. Hoo was disappointed and aat o' spirits, but nobody hed bothered her as Uncle Tummas hed bothert Dandy, till hoo met with Lowton's Lad again, as hed bin on th' look aat for her for a good while.

"Hello! Martha," he sed, "wheer's Dandy? Hes't mist him?"

"Ha do I know wheer Dandy is? I've not bin lookin for him."

"Don't thee tell any lies abaat it, Martha, or tha'll not get fort know what I've fond aat sin I sid thee."

"An what hes to found aat, then."

"Well I've fond aat as it wus aw a lie abaat Dandy gooin to th' Hole-i'th'-Wa. Insted o' that I sid him mysel comin in at th' tother eend o'th' tawn fro th' turnpike road, so its as plain as plain con be, Martha, as that messidge as he sent for thee t' meet him comin back fro th' Hole-i'th'-Wa wus only fort see whether thad be foo big enough fort goo. An tha hes bin made a foo on, but if I wus thee, Dandy would never make a foo o' me again."

Lowton's Lad hed done the mischief.

The next time Dandy an Mather's Martha met, Dandy expected her fort explain hersel to him, so he just stopt, and sed

"Well!"

"Goo to Jeriko," sed Mather's Martha, and hoo walkt on, leavin Dandy fort find aat, in th' best way as he could, what hed coom o'er her sin the fost and last time as they'd walkt aat together.



## HAW DANDY PREPAR'T FOR MARRYIN.

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I tow'd yo in my last Sketch abaat Dandy Cubbin's Coortin gettin a stop put to it by that gallus Lad o' Lowton's, an I don't think as I can do better na than let yo know haw he took that disappointment, and haw it made him give up th' thowts of coortin for some years.

It took Dandy a lung time to get o'er that doo with Mather's Martha. He never fond aat as it wus Lowton's Lad as hed workt th' mischief for him, but put it dawn as Martha hed thowt it would be fine fun fort make a foo on him, an then goo an tawk abaat it. So till he geet aat of his time as a prentiss, Dandy stuck to his pipe, an leet th' wenches goo their fling withaath runnin after em. An when he begun a gettin journeyman's wages, he thowt to hissel, he should be none the worse off, if he sav'd up twothry paund befoor he begun a gooin with anybody's dowter or sister. If th' course o' true love hed run smooth with him an Mather's Martha, he'd, as like as not, a bin marrit while he wus prentiss, an a teed hissel to poverty for th' rest of his days. But he'd bin gettin moor sense while he'd bin sulkin with yung wimmin. His eyes hed bin open, an he'd sin, by



lookin at other yung folk as hed bin in a hurry to get marrit, as it wus a deel asier fort marry, than it wus fort keep a wife. So one Setterday, when he'd bin paid his wages, he took five shilling of th' money, and put it away in a little bag, in th' box as he kept his cluas in, an sed to hissels as he'd do th' same evry Setterday, an never spend a penny o' that money till he wanted it fort buy somethink t'begin o' haasekeepin with. For sometime Dandy only went in for bein savin a bit. Th' five shilling wus regularly put into that bag. But durin evry wick he'd waste two or three shillin, or moor, on somethink or another as never did him any good. He wus savin that five shillin a wick to be sure, but he wusn't larnin fort be thrifty; he wusn't denyin hissels anythink as he wanted, fort lay by for a rainy day. But one day when he wus cauntin his money as he'd saved up, an fond as he wus woth between nine an ten paund, he thowt to hissels he'd turn o'er another leaf, an insted o' puttin five shillin a wick into that bag, he'd put in it, evry wick, aw th' money, as he hed left aat of his wages, after payin for his boord, an lodgin, an washin, an tekkin a shillin for ale an bacco; an when he wanted any cluas, insted o' payin for em aat of his pockit, he'd pay for em aat o' that bag, so as he shouldn't hev so monny shillin evry day, brunnin holes in his pockit. An that wus just what Dandy did. When he coom in at th' wick eend, with his wages in his pockit, th' fust thing as he did wus fort

pay what he owed at his lodgings; then he took a shillin, an put that in his waiscoat pockit for ale an bacco, an then he teed th' rest up in that bag. Dandy soon fond aat as his second road o' keepin his money, wus a deal better than th' fost. He couldn't, aw at wonst, get a wick o'er with only a shillin for ale and bacco. Two or three times he hed fort goo to that bag for six-pence moor, but he'd made his mind up fort try t'do on a shillin a wick, an he tried hard. He wus feightin hard with hissel for above a month, befoor he manidged fort do on hafe-an-aunce of bacco less a wick; but he conkert hissel at last; an in a while Dandy's bacco wus browt dawn to three hafe-aunces a wick at th' moost, but as he didn't quite get through that mich in seven days, theer wus evry na and agen, a wick as he'd only two hafe-aunces, an that wick (after he'd gotten hissel dawn to that shillin) he'd pay back th' copper as he owed that bag, for th' wicks as he'd hed moor than a shilling a wick for his pocket money.

But that money in that bag wus a torment to Dandy Cubbin after aw. He lik'd fort know as he hed it theer, an as he wus puttin moor to it evry wick. Theer wus a good lock on th' box as th' bag wus in, but for aw that, he couldn't help being feart as somebody met get fort know as he'd aw that money in th' box, an breik into it an tek his money. He'd look nice then, he thowt, fort hevt begin agen with a empty bag. If he wus fort ax somebody fort tek

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care on it for him, ha wus he fort know as they'd be honest with him, an not do him aat on it? But one day while he wus thinkin abaat this money of his, it coom into his mind as theer wus other folk i'th' place beside him, as sav'd money aat of their wages, or aat o' what they took in their shops, an they must hev some place wheer they put it fort be safe. Theer wus Joe Lummocks as hed bowt that haase as he'd gone fort live at, wheer hed he kept his money, while he wus savin up that hunderd an twenty paund as he'd paid for that haase? If he hed kept his money in a little bag in his cluas box, then Dandy would feel comfortable abaat his; but he shouldn't feel comfortable till he heerd what Joe hed fort say abaat it. So one neet he cawd on Joe, an towd him as he'd bin savin what money he could for a lung time, an he'd gotten abaat five-an-twenty paund sav'd, as he hed in a bag, lockt up in his cluas box; but what wus mitherin him wus whether he could hev this money in any safer place, or hed evrybody fort keep their money in th' haase till they ather bowt some furniture or some property with it.

Na Dandy couldn't a gone to anybody as knowd moor than Joe Lummocks did abaat savin money, an makin a bit o' money make for itsel a sma' bit moor money. Theer'd bin a Savin Bank in th' tawn some years then, an Joe, hevin allus a notion of savin his money, hed ferrited aat aw he could get fort know abaat what wus done with this

money as wus put into th' Savin Bank. When he geet fort know as this money hed fort be sent up to Goverment, an wus took care on by th' Goverment, an as th' Savin Bank manidgers wusn't let fort lend this money aat to folk at interest, an so fort run th' chance o' losin it, an as they'd tek in as low as a shillin a time, an allow interest on th' money as wus took to em, he wusn't lung befor he took what money he hed to that Savin Bank, an put it in. An ather him or his wife took what they could save evry wick to that Bank, an it wus fro that Bank as he drawd that hundred-an-twenty paund to pay for that haase as he'd gone fort live at. So when Dandy towd him what he'd coom abaas, he sed,

"Why Dandy, hes tha never heerd o'th' Savin Bank, as tha wants fort know what fort do with the money while thart savin it up?"

"Well, I hev heerd of a Savin Bank," sed Dandy, "but I know nowt abaas it mysel."

"Well then sit thee dawn, an tha shall know summut abaas it. That Savin Bank is a place as is provided for sich chaps as thee and me, as hes fort work for aw th' money as were fort hev, an as gets howd o' money by little bits at a time. Tha sis they'll tek a shillin fro thee, or they'll tek thirty paund, only if tha puts thirty paund in, tha caunt put any moor in till th' Bank gets into another year. Th' money's sent up to th' Goverment, so its in a safe place,

an evry year tha'll get put into the book the interest as is due to thee at th' rate of three shillin for every hunderd shillin as tha hes in th' Bank; or ift understands it better that way, tha'll get three paund for evry hunderd paund. I dare say tha's heerd as I gen a hunderd-an-twenty paund for this haase. Well dost know as aat of that hunderd-an-twenty, nearly twenty was money as I'd hed put in my book as interest. Na, if I'd kept my money as tha's bin keepin thine, I should a lost nearly twenty paund by it, tha sis. Ha much has to sav'd?"

"Well, I've gotten better than twenty-five paund," sed Dandy.

"Twenty-five paund! then while tha's bin savin that in th' bag, and bin keepin it lockt up in that box, thas bin losin two or three paund, or moor, of interest as tha'd a made at th' Savin Bank. Let me see, why, tha loses one and thrippence evry month as tha keeps twenty-five paund lockt up in a box a whomm, beside runnin th' chance of hevin th' money took by somebody as'll find aat ast keeps so much by thee. Tha's bin savin money, true anough, but at th' same time tha's bin losing money through keepin thee savins wheer th' money was doin no good."

"Then if tha was me, tha'd tek that money to th' Savin Bank, and let em keep it theer for thee."

"That's just what I should do whether tha was me or I was thee, or both on us was somebody else. I shouldn't lose a

penny o' interest as I could make with hevin my money in a safe place, as I could go to with a bit moor whenever I hed it."

Dandy was very thankful to Joe Lummocks for what he'd tow'd him, an th' next day as that Savin Bank wus open, Dandy's twenty-five paund odd wus took theer, an he coom aat with a little book in his pocket, as hed in it his name, an trade, an wheer he lived, an ha mich money he'd put in th' Bank. An when Dandy lookt in that book, when he geet whomm, he thowt to hisselt as it wus Mather's Martha, as he hed fort thank for that money, for if that coortin hed gone on straitforrod, he'd a hed no twenty-five paund, nor twenty-five shillin, nor may be twenty-five pennies befoor hand. So he lived to feel kind o' grateful to Mather's Martha for makin a foo of him, becose some ha he'd a kind of notion as it would turn aat as hoo'd done quite as mich in th' way of makin a mon on him.

By this time, too, Dandy hed awtert in monny ways. What he yust for think sich great things, he thowt very little of naw. His step dancin wus one o' thoos things as ned bin. He still hed his smook, but nobody sid him in the street with a little black pipe as didn't stick aat further fro his face than his nose did. An when he turnt aat at neet for a walk, anybody could see as soap and waater hed done theer work on Dandy not long befoor. He'd gin up th' street corners too; not as he'd gotten to grand to speak to his owd acquaintances, but he joint

a chap at th' weekly paper (theer was no daily papers in thoos days), and he geet a book fort read wheerever he could, and so he fond hissel droppin of fro monny things as he yust fort think th' world of.

An then theer was what he cawd his "resolution." He'd propost it, an seconded it, an carrit it, hissel. An his resolution was as he wouldn't think of goin with any woman till he'd sav'd as mich money as would buy a haase big anough for em to live in, beside hevin th' money as he'd hev fort lay aat for furniture. Dandy stuck to this resolution like wax. And it not only made him stick to his thrifty ways, but if work was a bit brisk, an any chance of overtime or bein paid by th' piece, Dandy was allus ready fort make his weekly money moor, an get that time a bit nearer when that haase would be his.

An th' time coom at last, when Dandy was nearly thirty year owd. He'd sav'd abaat a hunderd-an-fifty paund, an hed th' offer of a nice little haase, as would suit him, for a hunderd-an-twenty-five. He only wanted th' wife and some furniture, an nather was very hard fort get howd on. Theer was a yung woman as liv'd very near wheer Dandy lodged, as he'd lung thowt was the one as he owt to hev, if she wusn't pickt up befor his time. She met a bin marrit many a time o'er, but nobody seem't fort tek her fancy, an as she was gettin five or six-an-twenty, th' naburs begun a thinkin hoo was born for a owd maid. But it was

nowt o'th' sort. Hoo'd hed her eye on Dandy quite as mich as he'd hed his on her, and when he tow'd her as he wus ready fort marry, and would marry her, if hoo'd hev him, hoo as good as tow'd him as hoo'd marry in three months, if hoo liked him as weel after they'd kept company a bit as hoo thowt hoo should.

An so Dandy coorted his yung woman, and bowt his haase at th same time. An when th' day hed been fixt, th' furniture wus bowt, and put in, an th' two wus made one, an started life t'gether. An they're t'gether yet; but they've a bigger haase naw, for though Dandy hissel is no taller, he's fatter; an they've browt up a haaseful o' children, an theer's two or three on em as could let Dandy stand on a little stoo', and still be able fort look o'er his head. Dandy an his wife hes stuck to careful thrifty ways, an they'n stuck to that Savin Bank, puttin in, an puttin in, till they'n hed anough fort buy another haase, an then they'n drawn aat, but never it aw. Both on em would expect fort hev bad luck, if they took aw as they hed aat. They allus hev a neest-egg left for luck. An they hev hed what monny folks caw "good luck." But moor sensible folk says it is nowt but what met be expected, fro hard work an careful livin, an no waste in ather cluas, meit, or money.



## DOMINOES AN TIMBER TOES.

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It's th' rumist an th' moost owdfashunt place in aw th' tawn. You goo dawn a step when you goo in at ather front door, (its a corner haase,) an which ever door you tek, you hev to goo dawn a passidge. An th' fosit thing as strikes you is, as they must a browt th' greenhaase in-doors aat o'th' cowl, only, insted of usin it for plants an flowers, theer's nowt to be sin in it but jugs an glasses, an bottles an kegs, an sich like. You goo a bit further, an you'll get inside a little room with twothry cheers an plain flat seats agen the walls. I don't know whether there'll be room for ye or not, but they're dacent chaps as goes to that room, an if there's a chance of letting ye thrutch in, they'll let ye. If you do get seet dawn, yo'll not get aat agen in a horry, becose that room's a seet as yo'll not often see in a life time. Theer's a lot on em smookin, an as th' seelin's only abaat eight feet fro th' floor, th' room's rather claudy. But yo'll be able fort make aat as they're a jolly good tempert sort of chaps, as hes finisht their work, an hes dropt in theer fort enjoy theirsels. Theer's two little tables in th' room, an at each on em theer's a lot playin dominos. Disraily, an Saulsberry, an that Downin-street lot,

hesn't gotten their considerin caps fastent as tight on their heads, when they're tryin fort invent plans for mitherin the Russians, an the Musslefolk, an the Ahdeer of Kaw-bull, as thoos chaps has when they're followin one another in their games of dominoes. Yo should just hear em explain ha they'n won or lost a game through playin a three-four insted of a double-three, or a six-one insted of a five-two. Befoor I was privileged fort goo in that room, I yust to think as domino playin was only fit for childer. But that was just like me, fort set up my own opinion, an then follow it. But I've larnt fro thoos chaps as domino playin is a regular ciense, an as a chap may play at it aw his life an then not a fond aat aw as theer's in it. One of th' chaps as I seet next to, knowin as I wusn't up to th' ways of that room, was very good to me, explainin a deal of things as I shouldn't a fond aat for mysel. I shouldn't a thowt theer could a bin mich difference between one mon an another in playin dominoes, becose if theers a three an a six fort play to, I should a thowt it would a bin good play fort put dawn a domino as hed a six on it, an let th' next player goo on. Hawever, I wus informt as it wus only sich men as wus then playin, as know'd th' reet domino when it wus wantit; an as any on em would be able fort play aw theirs dawn, an leave me with a fistful, if I wus playin agen em. I axed this new friend of mine haw lung it wus sin they'd

begun of playin dominoes theer. He sed he didn't exactly know haw lung th' haase hed bin bilt, maybe two hunderd year or so, an he shouldn't be a bit surpris't fort be tow'd as some of thoos domino players as wus theer then, hed bin at it ever sin th' roof wus put on. They met weel know summut abaat domino playin, if that wus th' case. I went on fort ax haw mich he thowt they won or lost at a sitting. He sed he'd never bin able fort find aat haw mich any on em hed won, but he'd noticed very often what they lost. Sometimes thoos as lost th' game, lost their tempers a bit, only a bit, an each of th' losin partners said as they shouldn't a lost, if th' tother partners hed played different to what they did. An sometimes th' losers wouldn't play any moor, an made way for some other chaps. An then thoos as hed won th' game, often lost as weel. They'd get so jolly o'er th' thrashin as they'd gen to th' losers, they'd get up an shake hands o'er th' table, an turn raund on their cheers, an befoor they stopt they'd knock o'er a glass or two of ale, an that wus their losings. It bothert me fort think haw they manidged, in a little place like that, as wus chock full, an you hed a deal of trouble in arrangin your legs, befoor you could feel hafe comfortable, fort "turn raund on their cheers," as this chap said. I tow'd him I didn't see haw it could be done, withaat some o'th' company went into th' passidge, while thoos tother chaps performt on th'

cheers. But fro what he towld me it appeart they didn't raly turn raund on their cheers. They geet up an turnt their-sels raund, an then shook hands agen o'er th' table. It seemt that monny years ago, a great domino player hed fond aat as nothink kept good luck to him, after he'd wonse gotten it, like shakin hands with his partners, turnin raund on his cheer, an then shakin hands agen. But I wanted fort know haw mich money they lost in a game, an I towld him so. "Money;" sed he, "thoos are th' wrung sort of folk fort lose money, ather at domino playin or at anythink else. What's bin won an lost in this room sin th' haase opent wouldn't be a fortin of five shillin a year to thee. They'd aw on em think a jolly seet to mich of losin sixpence fort run any risk of losin it. Tha'd never see tuppence on th' table fro year's eend to year's eend, baat it wus waitin for th' landlady to tek up, an hoo isn't likely fort leave it theer very lung."

I felt kind of curius fort get fort know haw it wus as a room like this could a gotten sakrid to domino playin, an I thowt as it wus very likely as this chap as seet next to me could tell me summut abaat it if he would; so I thowt I'd try him a bit by axin some questions. So I begun with

"Haw lung did yo say some of these chaps hed bin playin dominoes in this haase?"

"Well," says he, "I believe I did say as I thowt they'd bin at it ever sin th' roof

wus put on, abaat two hunderd or moor year sin, but I don't know as I'st stick to that exactly. But I'll tell thee what I think 'll be as true as th' gospel, that ever sin dominoes wus known in this tawn, they'n bin play'd in this room, just as tha sis em play'd naw, an by fellows as, to a stranger, would look just like th' domino players ast sis here naw. I shouldn't be a bit surprised mysel some neet—for I believe a good deal in ghosts, an in folk as hes bin in their graves for years, naw an then hevin a turn raund in th' places as they yust be fond in—if a owd domino player, as hed bin berrit for fifty year, wus to come in here, an sit himsel dawn at one o'th' tables, an play th' game, an smook his pipe, an goo through aw th' performances as these chaps does, an then when eleven o'clock coom, drop aat quietly, an goo back to wheer he coom fro. I don't think as he'd ever find aat any difference in th' chaps as he wus playin with, to thoos as yust fort sit in th' room when he'd be wick. Tha sis in a place like this, theer caunt be mich of a change even in a hunderd year, becose nobody's made welcome, as a reglar thing, till he's dropt into th' ways o'th' room. For a time an a way, anybody 'll be made welcome here, just as tha art to-neet. But if he doesn't look like a chap as'll faw into their ways, it waint do for him't come to often. I don't want fort vex thee, but I may tell thee, it wouldn't do for thee t' be comin here to often. Tha's to mich fort

say, an tha axes to monny questuns. Why tha's hed moor fort say sin tha coom in here, than any on us reglar men here hed fort say for th' fost seven year as we seet here. Its one o'th' rules o' this place, as new men mon smook an be quiet, an listen to thoos as hes a reet to use their tungs. When a chap's sarv't his prentisship here, done his seven year quiet smookin an listenin, then he's let fort join in withaath th' tothers puttin dawn their pipes, or stoppin in their game, fort look at him, an tek th' measure of his cheek. Naw its this good owd rule bein followt up, as I believe it hes bin, ever sin th' haase wus bilt, as makes me think as a chap as lived fifty, or a hunderd, or two hunderd year sin, could come here at neet, an sit him dawn an hev his ale, an his pipe, an a hand at dominoes, baat ever suspectin as thoos he wus playin with, wusn't his owd cronis. Owd fashunt ways, owd fashunt notions, an owd fashunt talk, is as weel preservt in this room, as thoos mummies is, as comes fro Egipt wheer Joseph went to."

He went quiet after he'd said so mich, but after th' hint he'd gen me abaat talkin so mich, an axin so monny questuns, I wus rather feart of sayin anythink. But as I'd quite made up my mind as I shouldn't sarve seven year to smookin, drinkin ale, an sayin nowt, in that room, I thowt I'd better make the moost of my time, by pickin up aw as I could, so I sed in a quiet sort of way, as I should think there'd be a

many good tales as he could tell abaat th' owd folk as yust fort come to that room, as wus naw dead an not often nam't.

"I should think theer wus," he replied, quite brisk. "Why bless the heart, th' tales as tha could pick up anywheer else, compart with thoos as tha could hear in this room, would be like a toffy watch along side of a goold un. But then tha sis it isn't evrybody as con do em justiss. I caunt. But I con give thee one or two after my own fashun. Theer's one as a owd chap as coom here for some years after I startit, yust fort tell, abaat one o'th' reglar lot here, as wus owd men when he wus a lad. So I shouldn't wonder if him as its abaat hes bin dead a hunderd year or moor. Haaever, its not a lung tale, so tha'st hev it in th' best shape as I con put it in. I don't know what th' owd chap's reet name wus, nor nobody ever will know, but he's allus bin spoke of as "Owd Timber Toes" in this room. Tha may or may not hev heerd of him, but in his time, whenever that wus, he wus reglar in comin to this room evry neet. He drunk his ale, smooked, an played dominoes, just as thees chaps does naw. He wus cawd Timber Toes, becose when he wus a yung mon, he met with a accident, an hed both his legs took off above th' knees. He walked with two wooden legs an two sticks, never usin a crutch. Naw th' tale as they tellin, is abaat his losin thoos legs an what followt it. He wus abaat five-an-twenty when th' accident

happent him. He'd bin coortin, or raather tryin fort coax a yung woman fort let him coort her, for some time. But hoo'd give him no encouragement, an in th' eend tow'd him as hoo'd hev nowt t'do with him. He wus terribly dawn in th' maath abaat it, becose it wusn't just a bit of a fancy he hed for her. It wus strung honest love, as would a made him willin to do anythink, or suffer anythink, as would a preservt her fro harm, or hev added to her comfort an happiness. But hoo didn't return his love, an as hoo sed, would hev nowt to do with him. Monny a mon would a fum't terribly for a wick or two, an then hev picked up with another, an thowt no moor of th' fost. But this chap didn't. He stuck as true to her in his heart, as if hoo'd promist to love, honour, an obey him, an hed kept her word. But he never mithered her with gooin after her, after hoo'd tow'd him plain it wus no good. Well, th' yung woman marrit in a few months, an in coorse of time hoo'd a family coming abaat her. One day when her owdest little wench wus abaat four year owd, Timber Toes wus gooin along one o'th' streets, an theer wus a chap in a heivey cart as hed whipped his horse on to a gallop, an this greit heivy cart wus comin dawn th' street as fast as a doctor's gig, an th' driver lookin evry way but reet afoor him. An theer wus this curly-headed four-year-owd wench a toddlin across th' street, as this cart coom along at full tilt. Timber Toes seed it, an know'd



whoey's chilt it wus too. But when he seed it, th' cart wus only three or four yard fro th' chilt, while he wus a good hafe dozen. But he made a bolt for that chilt as if there'd bin no danger for hissels. An he geet it aat of harm's way too, but it wus th' last time as he ever did any runnin. He sav't th' chilt; but he wus knocked dawn by th' cart, and a wheel went o'er both legs, an made sich a mess on em, they'd both fort be tekken off.

"It's sed as theer wus hardly anybody in th' tawn as hed a dry eye, when they fust sid poor Timber Toes hobblin alung th' street with his wooden legs an his walkin sticks. But he didn't lose his sperrits o'er it. He could work at his trade just as weel withaat his legs as with em; an he'd sav'd that chilt, an sav'd th' mother an faather fro th' distress as they'd a bin in, if th' poor thing hed bin kilt. An that satisfied him. I shouldn't be a bit surprist if, in his heart, Timber Toes hed just th' same feelin for that chilt's mother after hoo marrit another mon, as he hed when he wantit her so badly for hissels. But, hawever that met, be, I never heerd as Timber Toes sed anythink abaat his feelins for th' mother.

"It wus said to be sometime after th' accident, as Timber Toes begun a comin to this room as we are in, fort play dominoes. Th' room just suited him to a T. He lik'd t'be quiet, an listen to other folk's tawk, while he watcht th' smook curl up fro his

pipe. That corner o'th' room," sed th' chap as wus tawkin, pointin to one, "wus his fro th' fost. It's th' moost comfortable place in th' room, an hed allus bin claimt by one o'th' owd stagers. But in this room, an evrywheer else in th' tawn, Timber Toes savin that chilt at th' expense of his own legs, wus considert a dumb claim, as nobody could say nay to, for th' best place, an th' moost attention. Some folks hes said as it wus Timber Toes as established th' rule of seven years quiet smookin in this room, befoor a chap wus free fort open his maath when he wantit. But I've heerd others say as th' rule wus made lung befoor Timber Toes coom into th' room. But, hawever that may be, its generally believt as Timber Toes wus let fort say whatever he liked lung befoor his prentissship wus aat. An its moor than likely as that'll be true too, becose common report says as folk would a deni'd him nothink.

"But if I'm fort get to a eend abaat Timber Toes befoor its time fort goo whomm, I mon horry on. Four or five year after th' accident, th' faather of th' little wench, as Timber Toes sav'd, deed, and th' mother wus left with a haaseful of little childer, with next to nowt fort keep em on. An then it wus as Timber Toes show'd moor than ever what sort o' stuff he wus made on. As soon as he heerd of th' death, he arrangt with the parson, as hed bin attendin th' sick mon, for evrythink as wus rekuir't for th' funeral, which he'd pay for, if his

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name was only kept dark. An theer was money went in th' same way fort help em on after th' funeral wus o'er. An then in one thing he leet hissel be known, for he geet th' parson to see th' widow an tell her as Timber Toes thowt, as he'd sav't that chilt's life, an as hoo hed no faather naw, he should like fort be at th' expense of bringing her up. An th' parson wus to argue dawn any objections as th' widow met make, an work it so as that yung wench would come once a wick to Timber Toes for th' money as he wantit fort pay for her keep, an her cluas, an her bringin up. An though th' widow stuck aat agen it at fust, th' parson aat talkt her, an hed his way. An Timber Toes fixt for her t'come evry Setterday afternoon, an hoo must bring her schoo' books with her, so as he could know haw hoo wus getting on. An hoo hed fort show him what hoo could do at sewin. An in coorse of time hoo begun a workin a sampler, as wenchas yust in owd times. It hed aw th' A B C on it, an her name, an when hoo wus born, an green trees as lookt like three-cornert lozingis with a handle to em, an animals as met a bin ather lions or tigers, or rats or mice, an a yallo border done in a zigzag way. An Timber Toes hed this sampler put in a black frame, an it wus hung up in his room, an he yust fort show it to his friends, an ax em what they thowt of that for a bit of work. An as he seet in his cheer he'd knock his wooden legs on th' floor, an look at that sampler

an then at th' wench as hed workt it, an folk wus ready fort swear as he thowt, in th' wench and th' sampler, he'd getten th' best o'th' bargain, an his legs as he'd lost wusn't woth thinkin abaat.

"I'm tellin this tale as its been towed in this room, fro one lot to another, for nobody knows haw lung a time. A good monny folk, when they'n heerd it for th' fust time, hes expected as Timber Toes an that widow would a marrit, in some dacent time after th' husband's funeral. Becose it wus plain anough fro his never gettin marrit hissels, an his doin for th' wench an th' widow, as th' owd feelin hed never worn off him. But he never went near that widow's haase, nor past through th' street as it wus in any oftener than he could help. If he'd bin what he wus befoor that cart went o'er him, an hed thowt he'd a chance, he'd a gone to that widow an towed her that he wus as ready fort hev her then, with her belungins, as he wus years ago, when he wus a yung mon, an as hansome on his legs as moost yung men in th' tawn. But even if th' widow could be persuaded to hev him naw, he couldn't think o' fastenin her to a piece of a mon like him, as would likely be, in his owd age, a trubble to hissels an to everybody abaat him. N'ow, he'd live his life, an hoo must live hers. If hoo marrit agen, he'd try fort think it wus for th' best; but he didn't like th' thowt on it.

"An time past on till Timber Toes' little wench hed grown into a yung woman o'th'

age her mother wus when hoo geet marrit. An one day as hoo wus sittin with him, an he notist as hoo wus moor quiet than yusyl, an as her face kept redenin up, he geet feart as hoo wus aat of sorts, an gooin t' be laid up. He axt her whether anythink ailt her; an he wus quite sure summut did, when he sid haw hoo redent up agen, and lookt as if hoo'd faw off th' cheer. Summut wus up with her, but it wus nowt but that owd complaint of th' heart as comes on th' lasses when they've bin listenin, with willin ears, to "th' owd, owd story." It wus only by pieces an snatches as Timber Toes geet aat on her as theer wus a yung mon as wantit fort marry her, an as hoo'd like weel enough fort marry, if him an her mother wus willin hoo should. Poor Timber Toes awmost thowt he could feel th' rumatices in his wooden legs, when th' wench hed leet it aat. But he wouldn't a gone agen her whatever it wus, unless he wus quite sure hoo wus gooin wrung. But he knowd th' yung chap t' be one as would make a good husband, and so after thinkin it quietly o'er for some time, he towed her as he wus quite willin if her mother wus.

"An that same parson wus livin as hed berrit th' faather, and he marrit th' two yung folk. An after it wus o'er, th' parson begun a thinkin abaat Timber Toes an that widow. Th' widow's sons and dowers wus gettin grown up, an nearly able fort keep their-sels, an, as near as he could reckon what owt fort be, that widow owt to marry

Timber Toes, an look after him in his owd age; for it wus plain Timber Toes hedn't gettin o'er his fust love. An theer wus summat abaat that widow as led th' parson fort think as if Timber Toes hed ever axt her t' marry him after her husband's death, he'd not hev hed fort ax her twice. So he seet to work between thoos two, an though it hesn't coom dawn haw he manidged between em, it followt fro what he said, or did, or contrivt, as Timber Toes wus sin in th' street as th' widow liv'd in, an though th' naburs could hardly beleev their eyes, he raly did hobble on till he geet to her haase, and went in. Theer wus hardly anythink sed between em. Timber Toes wus nearly as quiet as a prentiss hand in this room. But they understood one another weel enough. Timber Toes wus to hev th' only woman as he'd ever wantit; an that woman wus fort hev th' happiness o' doin lovin service to one as hed bin her lover an friend for th' moost part on his life.

"It's further sed of Timber Toes as he liv'd to be a very owd mon; that as lung as ever he could trust hissel aat at neet he wus fort be sin in that corner theer, ather smookin a lung pipe, or playin at dominoes. Though they wus so owd when he marrit their mother, th' widow's childer allus cawd him faather after th' weddin; and when th' granchilder begun a comin he wus th' granfaather, an a reet happy granfaather too, when th' little things begun a howdin theirsels up by his wooden legs, an laffin in his face.

"An when he deed everybody went to his funerul. An they berrit him near to th' owd yew tree, as tha'll remember being in th' churchyard when tha wus a lad. An th' chaps as he yust meet in this room clubb'd their money t'gether, an hed a grave stone put o'er him; an," said he, pullin aat a owd pocket-book, an fumblin among th' papers till he geet howd on one as wus nearly worn aat, "this is what they hed put on his grave stone—

'Under the sod, rests Timber Toes,  
His mem'ry's sweet, as new-pluck'd rose.  
Joys he increas'd, and sooth'd our woes :  
A better man there's nob'dy knows.  
While water runs, and green grass grows,  
Blest be thy mem'ry, Timber Toes.'

"Well, said I, "there's one question as I should like fort ax, even if yo fellows spiflicates me for usin my tung. Didt' ever hear haw it wus as a dacent chap like him, as tha's bin tellin abaat, is only knowd naw-a-days by a nick-name?"

"Find it aat!" sed he. "I tow'd thee befor ast tawked to mich, an axed to monny questuns. So find it aat for thee-sel; an ift'll only not speik agen till tha does find it aat, tha'll be kwalified fort come an start thee prentisship in this room to-morrow neet."

I could see by th' way as t'other chaps lookt at me, as I'd tekken moor rope than they'd a bin willing to hev gin me, so I kept my tung still for th' remainder o'th' neet, and when closin time coom we aw left t'gether.

## TUMMY MULLIS COMES UP AS A MORRAL.

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Yo'll hev heerd folk say as they wouldn't live their lives o'er agen, if they could, not for any money. They'n hed so mich trubble, an gone through so mich hardship, an th' world's just em so quare, theer's nowt as would be so bad as hevin their time o'er agen. But I've moostly fond as folk as tawks this way, hes bin o' so little good i'th' world as fort make it a greiter kalamity for other folk than for theirsels, for em t'hev their time o'er agen. One chance is quite enough for sich folk, becose they'd do no better, an be o' no moor use, if they hed a second turn. Naw, as for me, I'm allus hevin my time o'er agen. I lies in bed monny a hafe-hour, an hour, livin o'er agen owd days, when th' world to me wus a bran new un. An as for not liking it I've none such feelin. It's th' very thing as I do like; rootin in th' corner cubberts of my memry, for things as happent thirty, or forty, or fifty year sin. An when I'm sittin quiet by th' fire of a neet, owd times comes back to me as fresh as ever. They met aw a bin painted on one o' thoos diarammers for me. An as I look at th' fire, I con often enough see owd faces as hes bin gone fro these parts, or maybe bin put under th'



sod, monny a year sin. We'en hed some gradely cowl weather lately, and th' tother morning I wus none so reddy for gettin aat o' bed as I owt t'a bin. So I lee theer, wheer I wus, warm an comfortable, rootin in th' corner cubberts as I nam't. When I wus a lad, I wus put to work at ten year owd. We started at six o'clock in th' mornin, evry day but Monday, an in th' winter time I hed fort be in th' shop abaat hafe-past five, fort get a good fire gooin in th' little stove, so as th' place would be warm when th' mester an th' men coom in.

I thowt of thoos days as I wus lyin in bed, an o' one mornin in pertikkler. I'd gotten up abaat five o'clock, so as I could make th' fire for my mother, an hev time for lookin in th' buttry for summut to eight befoor I went. When I geet to th' kitchen fire grate, theer wus no red in th' grate, so I broke up th' rakin cob, but fond as th' coal an sinders wus quite cowl, an theer wus no gettin a leet with th' brimstone matches as we yust in thoos days. Naw-a-days, in a case like that, we should hev nowt to do but grope with aar fingers along th' shelf as th' candlesticks are on, till we fond th' box of lucifer matches, an then strike a leet in no time. But at th' time I'm writin abaat, theer wus no sich things as matches for strikin a leet, same as we hev naw, at three an four boxes a penny. Theer wus no gas works in th' tawn then, an theer wus no railroads in th' country. Befoor we went t'bed at neet, th' kitchen

fire hed fort be let dawn a bit. Then a good big lump o' coal, as wus cawd th' "rakin cob," wus put on th' fire; an then a lot o'th' hess fro under th' fireplace wus shuffelt beheend, an on ather side o' this cob, an flattent dawn a bit with th' back o'th' shuffle. An then we went t'bed, an left it till mornin. An in th' mornin when we geet up, if theer wus any red fort be sin in th' grate, we stuck a brimstone match to it, an geet a leet that way. But if we couldn't get a leet, then we hed fort breik th' cob in th' best way we could in th' dark, an very likely theer'd be some part on it as wus hot enough to set th' brimstone a burning. But this morning as I'm tellin abaat, th' coal, an th' sinders, an th' grate wus aw cawd, an theer wus I in th' dark, befoor anybody expected fort see ather lucifer matches or gas in th' tawn. It wus weel for me as I knowd wheer th' lantern wus, an better still as I could feel as theer wus a bit o' candle left in it. Becose I hed fort put my cap on, an goo aat an find somebody up as would give me a leet. It wus a bitter cawd mornin in winter time, an I hed fort walk abaat a good deal befoor I sid a leet anywheer. But at last I could see a leet through th' nicks o'th' shutters to Tummy Mullis's front place, so I went theer an knockt at th' door. Nobody coom to th' fust knock, so I knockt agen, an then Tummy's wife coom to th' door, an baat openin it, cawd aat "Whoey's theer?" I towd her it wus me, an axt if hoo'd be so

good ast' give me a leet to th' bit o' candle as I hed in my lantern. Hoo sed nowt, but opent th' door just anough fort tek my lantern in, an then pusht th' door to baat latchin it. Th' wind blowd th' door open a bit, an leet me hev a seet as I'm not likely fort forget in this world. While I wus at that door, an for some time after, I thowt Tummy Mullis hed bin murdert by his wife. He lee on th' flure on his back full length near to th' fireplace. His face, an his neck, an aw th' front of his shirt, wus bloody, an his nose lookt as if it hed bin smasht in. I geet whomm with that leeted candle as soon as I could, an kindelt th' fire, an after a look in th' buttry, went of to th' shop. Fro th' talk as th' mester an th' men hed when they coom in, I fond aat as Tummy Mullis hedn't bin injure't by his wife, he'd gotten his wackin in another way.

But th' story abaat Tummy Mullis mon be towd in a straitforrod road, so I mon begin gradely. Tummy wus a collier, one o'th' owdfashunt sort as yo'll hev heerd bein in thees parts fifty year sin. At eightin, an drinkin, an feightin, he wus one o'th' tip-toppers. He'd fowt an b'yetten moor men than any collier raund abaat. An that wus sayin a greit deal, for theer wus some feightin colliers in thoos days. Yo see they hedn't gone in then for coorsin dogs, an fiddles, an piannos, an they injied theirsels in a rough sort of a way, an did a feight or two whenever they hed th' chance.

Theer's one thing as con be sed in their favor, they hedn't their clogs pinted off at th' toes for purrin. I don't think as purrin hed a name in any part o' Lancasheer in thoos days, an it ne'er hes hed in this naburhood. Hawever, of aw th' chaps in th' place as went in for drinkin, an feightin, an rowin, Tummy Mullis wus th' wost. He'd gotten monny a black mark on his head an face, as hed bin made by th' roof fawin on him in th' coal pit. But he'd a fine seet moor marks on him as he'd gotten in th' rows he'd bin in. If he wus peilert an powlert till he wouldn't know hissel, he wus allus up agen to time, an bangin at th' tother chap till th' tother gen in. In time Tummy hed gotten his name up, so as nob'dy would feight with him. They'd sooner own reet strait aat as they wus freetent on him, than get theirsels knockt pieces with tryin t'mester him. An, though yo'll think it strange, it wus a bad thing for Tummy hevin nob'dy fort stand up agen him. When he hed fort feight for his place, he hed some little thowt for other folks. But when evrybody ownt as he could b'yer em aw, it turnt Tummy into a reglar hecterin bully, as wus ne'er asy hissel baat he wus makin evrybody else unasy. Aw raund abaat he'd look into th' publichaases fort see if he couldn't raise a feight, or a row o' some sort. An monny a time he's cleart evrybody aat o'th' haases, an towd th' landlords as th' fost mon as coom in would hev fort feight him. An so they hed fort keep

folk aat o' their haases for fear of a row, an things bein brokken an smasht.

Haweever, th' time coom when Tummy begun o'th' wrung mon. Theer wus a jiner as hedn't bin lung in th' tawn. He wus a strung bilt fellow, an quiet o'er his ale an his pipe. He didn't interfere with anybody's tawk, or with anythink as they wus doin. An when he wus spokken to, he wus civil an ready with his tung. He wusn't mich of a drinker; two, or at th' aatside three, glasses of ale bein as mich as he'd goo in for. Well, this jiner an a lot moor wus in a publichaase one neet when Tummy went in. A lot on em begun a drinkin up their ale when they seed him, intendin fort be off. Befoor he seet dawn, he notist this new chap, an as he walkt past him, he knockt th' jiner's pipe aat on his maath. Th' jiner didn't look much put aat, but he geet up an axt Tummy, quiet anough, if that wus a accident or hed bin done a purpose. Th' quiet way as this jiner seemt fort tek it, aggravated Tummy, an he begun, in his yusyul way, of cossin this jiner, an challengein him fort feight, an thretnin fort breik evry bone in his hide if he didn't feight, an so on. Th' jiner kept as quiet as he'd bin befoor his pipe wus brokken, an sed he didn't want fort feight, an shouldn't like fort be one in a feight, but if nothink else would satisfy Tummy, an th' company would goo with em to some quiet place an see fair play, why, he'd not say nay. A lot on em tried fort perswade th' jiner not fort

goo into a feight with Tummy, an they tow'd summut of Tummy's history, haw he'd bin bullockin an b'yerin evrybody in th' tawn for years. This hed raather a contrary effect on that jiner, for when he heerd it, he said as nowt in th' world should keep him fro that feight. But wheer wus they fort feight? It couldn't come off aat-side, becose they'd not be able fort see one another. But one o'th' chaps in th' room sed as they met feight in his cart haase if they liked, an he'd find th' candles. So they went to th' cart haase, an stript fort feight. Tummy ne'er used so mich bad langwidge befoor. He thretent th' jiner as he'd knock th' life aat on him, an strike him stiff, an that sort of thing. But th' jiner never made reply but wonst, when he tow'd Tummy fort see whether he could tek care on hissel, befoor he let folk know what he wus gooin t'do for him, th' jiner. An so they begun. Tummy bilin o'er with rage, an that jiner as quiet in his ways, as if he wus only gooin fort knock a tack in. Tummy tried his best fort land on th' jiner's face, or chist, or anywheer indeed. An aw that jiner seemt fort be doin, wus fort turn Tummy's blows off him, an keep hissel fro bein hit. As Tummy geet moor aat o' temper, he geet moor lunjus, an he sent aat his fists in aw directions. An then, as thoos as wus at th' feight sed after, th' jiner thowt Tummy met as weel hev a bit of a rest, so he landed on Tummy's reet cheek bone, an knockt him dawn on th'

flure like a stone. Tummy coom up agen, game anough; but he couldn't reich that jiner's face or chist hawever he tried, an when th' jiner thowt he owt fort hev another rest, Tummy went off his legs in th' same fashun as he'd gone befoor. But he coom up agen, an agen, an agen; an then th' jiner seed as theer wus nothink for it but knockin aw th' feightin aat o' Tummy. An he did; for after th' last knock-dawn blow as he'd gen him, Tummy wus aat o' condition for feightin, an would be for some time. Two or three chaps geet him whomm, as weel as they could, wheer he'd nather go t'bed, nor let his wife wash him, nor change his shirt, nor do anythink with him; but laid hissel dawn on th' flure by th' fire, wheer his wife hed fort watch him aw neet, an wus watchin him when I knockt at th' door an axt for that leet.

Tummy wus some wicks befoor he wus fit for any work, not fort speik of any feightin. An when he geet abaat agen, he'd no eend of marks as that jiner hed gen him on his face, as wus mixed up with thoos black marks as he'd gotten in th' coal pit. But th' jiner hed knockt th' moost o'th' swagger aat on him, an th' folk as hed yust be so feart on him, stuck up to him, an leet him know as he'd bin b'yetten wonse, an met be b'yetten agen, if he carrit on as he yust fort do. Tummy Mullis becoom a very different chap after that doo in th' cart haase, an yo con tek my word for it, he ne'er knockt anybody's pipe aat o' their

maath, after he'd tried it on with that jiner. An th' strangest thing abaat that jiner wus, as he'd ne'er hed a feight in his life befoor. He wus a quiet chap, as would ne'er hev a quarrel with anybody of his own acoord. But he'd knockt abaat th' country a greit deal; an he'd fond aat as a chap as couldn't stand up for hissel, wus allus bein put on, an throt a one side, by bullyin chaps as they'd come across. So he thowt to hissel, it wouldn't do him any harm fort larn fort use his fists a bit, so as he could stand up for hissel, if theer wus ever any need on it. So he took lessons with th' boxin gloves, an bein middlin tall, an very strung, he soon geet as he could use thoos gloves to some purpose. An then he dropt em. He hedn't bin quallyfyin hissel for a feighter—he'd only bin gooin through a trainin as would make him able fort stand befoor any blaggard anywheer, an give him a lesson as would do him good. He settled dawn in th' tawn, an hed a shop of his own, an men workin for him, an geet on weel, but he ne'er hed no moor ocashun for usin thoos fists of his, becose he never wus on th' look aat for a quarrel with anybody; an other folk knowd weel anough as they'd get th' wost on it, if they went aat o' their way fort fasten a quarrel on him. An it wus allus thowt as theer wus nothink like th' feightin amung th' colliers, an other men as wus gin to it, after that battle between Tummy Mullis an th' jiner. Folk sed as he'd tow't em a lesson, as folk



as wus so reddy fort pitch into other folk baat any ocashun met find theersels at any time dropt on to by a jiner; when aw as they'd get fro their friends would be a shaat of "Sarv't thee reet!"

Naw it seems to me as Tummy Mullis's case comes up as a morral for aw thoos folk as is makin sich a nise in th' country abaat owd Tent'em's polasy, an owd Verbosaty's polasy. Yo'll know as owd Tent'em's notion is, as we should allus speik plain; tell folk just what we beleev an thinken at th' time; an ne'er mind whether it vexes or pleeses, so lung as its fair an reet, an what we owt to say an think. An th' owd chap follows this up as soon as anybody hes begun a tawkin back to him in a cheeky fashun, an sayin owt abaat feightin, by pooin off his kooat an waiskut, an turnin up his shirt sleeves, just fort show as if theer hes fort be feightin, he mon be ready fort start as soon as th' tother chap. But he gus on with his work just as if nothink hed bin sed, an just as he would a done if th' tother chap hed axed him to come an hev a cup o' tay with him when neet coom. Time, an time agen, chaps hes tried fort put owd Tent'em's garden hedge further back, an they'n done their best fort get into his plantations an cut his trees dawn; an evry naw an agen they'n gotten into his haases, an tried fort stop in em baat payin rent, or acknollidgin owd Tent'em any way. But good Lorjus days, when owd Tent'em's kooat an waiskut gets pitched a one side,

an his shirt sleeves is stript up, th' feight's o'er in no time, becose he goes into it with lots o' wind, an good mussel an sinyu. He's allus lots o' backers; but then at th' same time theer's allus lots as gis him a bad name. An th' nisyist o'th' lot is owd Verbosaty, as hes a greit lot o' followers hissel. This owd chap's notion is summut like this:—If anybody tawks o' tekkin anythink o' yore's, or anythink as belongs to a friend o' yores, if yo don't like it, yo shouldn't speik ruff to him for fear of vexin him, an makin him want moor than he did at fost. An while this is gooin on between o', yo should be turnin o'er in yore mind whether it wouldn't be better for yo or yore frend, as th' case may be, fort let him hev what he wants, if yo caunt keep it baat hevin a feight o'er it. An he's a beleef as folk as wants what isn't theirs, mon hev some better use for it, than th' folk as hes it, if it could only be fond aat. He seems fort think as th' good time 'll be browt abaat by thoos as is bowd enough, an strung enough, tekkin aw as they wanten, an thoos as is th' losers being very quiet, an sayin nowt to vex t'others. An he'll tawk for a wick t'gether, an moor, abaat th' disgrace, an misry, as is browt on yumanity by owd Tent'em's ways o' bein allus reddy for a feight. Naw, th' quarest thing abaat it is as owd Tent'em, though he's bin in some rows, an hes hed fort feight betimes, hes kept his own with less feightin than owd Verbosaty hes hed, an aatsiders as he's

fowten with, or bin near to feightin with, hes moor respest for him, an'll tek moor notice of hafe-a-dozen words of his, than they will if owd Verbosaty wus tawkin to em, an writin to em, for a month. Becose they known weel anough as what he says he'll stick to ; an if he says it'll bring on feightin, they hev fort ather back off or make ready. Naw, owd Verbosaty allus hes so mich fort say, an teks so lung in sayin it, that they caunt tell what he raly means fort do five times aat of six. An so, when he's meant feightin, an they'n not thowt so, theers bin some terrible doos. But moor oftener, they'n thowt he's only meant tawkin, an tekken what they wantit, an its bin aw reet with owd Verbosaty.

Naw yo may think what yo like, an crack up Tummy Mullis an owd Verbosaty as lung as yo like, but my notion is as sich chaps as that jiner an owd Tent'em, is far away befoor ather o'th' tothers. If chaps would stick up for theirsels an their reets, in a quiet determint way, an when need must, be ready fort feight for em, Tummy Mullises in tawn's like this, an Tummy Mullises as swaggers o'er moor graund, would be a deal asier quietent, than they ever will be with owd Verbosaty's tawkin an preitchin.

## MY MOTHER-IN-LAW.

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I wonder haw it is as mother-in-laws hes gotten sich a bad name as they hen gotten with so monny folk. Why goodness days, haw could a mon hev gotten his wife, or a wife a geet howd of her husbant, if it hedn't a bin for th' mother-in-law? But for aw that, haw monny wives or husbants, ever tow'd th' mother-in-law as they wus very mich obleeg't to em? Not monny, I'm sure. Th' mother-in-law, befoor hoo is th' mother-in-law, is nearly allus thowt a greit deel on, an both th' yung mon an th' yung woman is reddy enough fort creep up her sleeve. But when th' marridge hes coom off, an hoo's raley dropt into bein a mother-in-law, then th' fat's in th' fire, nearly evry time as hoo opens her maath. An hoo's moor likely fort bring abaat what hoo wants by pretendin fort want summut quite different. If hoo's th' husbant's mother then th' wife tents her like a cat does a mice, so as hoo can allus be reddy fort let it be sin as hoo's a will of her own, an's owd enough fort manidge a haase baat any interferin. An if hoo's th' wife's mother, moost likely th' husbant hes hard work for screw up corridge fort say any-think while hoo's theer, so he shooves his hat on an walks aat, an teks care not fort

come back befoor hoo's gone. Naw th' moost o' this unpleasantness comes fro these folk not understandin one another gradely. Theer isn't anybody in th' world as is so ankshus for a yung cupple fort get on weel, an hev a nice haase of furnitcher, an evrythink nice an comfortable abaat em, as th' mother-in-law is. An theer isn't anybody as'll pinch theirsels, an try here, theer, an evrywheer, fort save a shillin or two fort buy summut useful for a yung cupple, like a mother-in-law will. Why I've knowd cases wheer mother-in-laws, an not owd uns ather, would wear a owd bonnet or a owd dress, or goo baat a warm shawl for their backs, so as they could spend th' money on th' dowter, or dowter-in-law, or her childer. I dare say they're a bit meddlesome, an to mich gen to dealin aat advice grattis, but then what o' that? when they're allus so reddy fort give what's o' moor use than advice.

I've bin speikin of mother-in-laws in general, an not of any in pertikkler, as'll be known to evrybody as knows anythink abaat aar family and belangins. I hevn't a relashun in th' world, beside th' wife an th' childer, as I think moor on than my mother-in-law. Hoo's a owd body naw, an wakely, an leins a deel, ather sittin or standin. But hoo's a evergreen heart in her body, as'll never get dried up an withert. Hoo's bin a widow above twenty year, an any time durin th' last dozen year, an befoor that too, theer's bin a

corner of aar kitchen with a arm chair in it, as that owd mother-in-law met a hed, if hoo'd only a gen up her workin, an a coom, an settelt dawn with us an th' childer. But hoo wus allus to independent fort be a burden on anybody as lung as hoo could knock abaat and make summut aat on her own work. For starchin caps, an shirts, an collars ; for makin oatmeil cakes an muffins, an tuppenny pies ; an plum cakes for weddins an marryins ; theer never wus her aqual anywheer raund abaat here. Hoo met a made no eend o' money, if scrattin an savin, an doin no good to nob'dy, hed bin in her way. But any time hoo'd sooner a gen a nabur a dinner, or a bowt a pair o' shoes for a chilt as wus barefut, or a took in some faatherless chilt fort bring up, than a put a hanful o' goold in a owd stockin. Thoos as hed money, hoo'd say, owt fort do some good with it, if they expectit fort hev their health an strength continut to em fort make moor. But heo wusn't one o' thoos charitable folk as spends aw as they maken on theirsels an others, an lays by nowt for owd age. Evry year hoo'd summut moor laid aside fort keep her when hoo could do nowt, an fort berry her after hoo deed. Hoo shouldn't want mich, hoo sed, as hoo thowt her life wouldn't be a lung un after hoo hed fort give up dooin what hoo'd so lung bin at. My owd woman's bin at her for above a dozen year fort give up her work an come an squat dawn on aar harthstone.

But aw as hoo could get aat on her wus,

“Th’ time hesn’t coom yet for me t’come to yore haase. When it does come, I’ll breik up my haase, an come an eend my days with thee an Jack.”

This spell of cowl weather we’en bin hevin has tow’d a tale on th’ owl woman. Hoo’s hed roomatis for years, but when th’ frost coom hoo wus took so bad hoo could use nather legs nor arms, and hoo tow’d my owl woman as hoo thowt th’ “Time hed coom,” but hoo’d wait an see if th’ roomatis went a bit asier, befoor hoo made th’ change.

Last wick her bits of things wus sow’d, an hoo coom an took up her place in th’ warm corner of aar kitchen, her cheer draw’d within a yard of th’ oven door, wheer hoo’s aat o’th’ draft, an gets th’ warmth fro th’ fire. I wus sorry anough fort see haw ailing hoo wus, an what a job it wus for her fort get abaat th’ haase a bit, an as hoo couldn’t get up stairs, baat bein carrit. But for aw that, I wus moor glad fort see her theer, an fort think that as lung as hoo lived, hoo would be theer along with us, an we should be able fort make her as comfortable as possible, an get her whatever hoo wantit, an make life last aat with her to th’ very last minit, than I should a bin, if I’d hed a letter fro London, axin me fort write my sketches for a London paper, at a paund a wick.

It does me good fort look at her, as hoo sits in that cheer, leinin o’er towart th’ fire. I says to mysel, theer’s a woman—a

owd woman—as nob'dy, as didn't know summut abaat her, would be mich struck with. An yet that owd woman, in her poor way, hes lived a moor useful life, an hes scattert moor blessins araund her, an hes made moor folk better through her bein in th' world, than monny a thasand wimmin as hes bin ladies aw theer life, with moor money than they knowd what fort do with. An theer's a woman, as when hoo wus left a widow, ne'er thowt a getting her livin by pooin a lung face, an axin for charity, an gettin her name seet dawn for a awmshaase, an tryin t'make folk beleev as losin her husbant hed browt her to religion an clemmin, at th' same time. N'ow, when her prop fawd, hoo lookt raund fort see which road, by hard work, hoo could keep hersel baat bein a burden to her childer, or disgracin em by charity doles an parish money. That's th' kind o' woman, says I to mysel, as hes seet a example to men an wimmin in this tawn, as would a emtid th' workhaase, hev made evry chilt hev a full belly an good cluas, an a browt plenty an happiness on evry harth stone; if th' example hed only bin followt. Theer's a woman, as hes browt up moor than one orfan wench—as, but for her, would a hed to goo to th' workhaase—an tow't em evrythink abaat haase work, an turnt em sat good sarvents, an fost-rate wives for workin men. An thoos wenches naw look on her as their mother, and teiches their little uns fort caw her “granny.” Aar gardyuns o'th' poor



makes a greit naise abaat boordin aat th' orfan and deserted childer as they hev in th' workhaase. That owd woman theer, took in childer like that, baat parish pay or gettin any public credit or thanks for it, befoor th' boordin aat of pauper childer wus ever heerd on. But th' best pint abaat that owd woman, as sits in that cheer by aar fireplace, wus, as hoo never seemt fort think, when hoo'd feed a hungry chilt, or would tek some provision for a starving family, or would tek in a poor orfan, an wash, an clothe, an feed, an bring it up, as hoo wus doin anythink aat o'th' common or different to what other folk did. For any airs as hoo gen hersel, or for any credit as hoo ever claimt, hoo met a bin th' moost miserable sinner as ever seet in th' free benches, an followt th' words as th' parish clerk drawlt aat, when th' parson an th' folk in th' church wus sayin th' Litany. I don't think as hoo'd a bin moor surprist if anybody hed tow'd her as hoo wus a thief, than hoo would a bin if anybody hed sed in her hearin, as her life wus a example of independence an noble efforts to follow duty an do good, just wheer a wise God hed plac't her. But that's just what could a bin sed, an what I beleev hes bin sed, beheed her back, time and time agen.

An that's my mother-in-law! Th' woman as I should, followin th' example seet by so monny, hev fowt agen comin on my harthstone. An aw becose hoo's my mother-in-law! Well, if I con make her latter eend

of life asier; if I con make th' pillow on her cheer softer; if I con make sleep come to her eelids at neet; if I con drive roomatis aat of her bones, an aw her infurmatis away; if I con make her saund agen, an able fort tron abaat th' haase; I'st keep her in this haase, an on that harthstone, as lung as it howds me an my owd woman, her dowter. Fro th' time as I marrit to naw, hoo never took me in hand, fort put me reet an set me streit. An yet, fro that time to this, I've allus thowt as her way of livin, an her quiet yuseful life, wus hevin a thasand times moor effect on me, than hoo'd a hed if hoo'd a come th' common mother-in-law o'er me, an a bin puttin me reet evry time I'd gotten a bit aat on it.

An when I let aat as its owin to this mother-in-law comin into th' haase, as I hevn't hed as mich time on my hands this wick for yusin my pen as I yusually hev, I shouldn't be a bit surpris't if theer's a good many as'll rejice with me as I've gotten my mother-in-law in th' haase, fort make my yarns, as I'm in th' habit of spinnin aat, a bit shorter. Some folk as hes hed moor practis, could tell aw as I hev fort tell evry wick, in abaat hafe as monny words, I've no daat. They could bile their notions dawn till aw th' scum geet to th' top, an then throw that a one side, an hev some dawn-reet good stuff fort tek to th' printer. I could a done as mich mysel, if I'd only bin let fort goo to Jemmy Wainreet's Schoo till I wus abaat fourteen, instid of bein took

away befoor I wus ten. Why, with four moor year of Jemmy's teichin, I should nearly a knowd as mich as he did, an I shouldn't wonder, if lung befoor this, theer'd a bin Jack Bradshaw's shillin books in yallow covers, an red covers, an green covers, an aw sorts o' covers, on thoos bookstalls at th' railway stations, an um a sellin by thasands, an me drawin no eend o' money fro th' chaps as printed em. If I'd only a thowt as theer wus aw that fort be gotten aat o' Jemmy Wainreet at th' Moss Schoo, I should ne'er a bin so freetent of his strap as I wus, or so glad when aar folk towd me as they'd gotten me a place, an I should hev fort leev Schoo. Poor Jemmy! he's mist th' chance too! Haw his owd heart would a rejest as he'd turnt o'er th' leaves o' my books, an showd em to folk, an towd em as he wus th' mon as hed towd me aw as wus in em. When I think abaat what I've mist, I'm twice as sorry for Jemmy's sake as I am for my own. He'd a took it as th' moost convincin proof as theer could be, as his system, as he followt aat when I went to th' Schoo, wus th' only good un. If yo went to his Schoo, yo'll know weel anough what his system wus, but if yo didn't, I may say as it only took a single word to discribe it; an that wus—STRAP. If yo blundert o'er yore lessons, aat coom that Strap. If yo couldn't do a sum, he didn't lose any time inquiren what it wus yo didn't understand—aat coom that Strap. If yo hed fort tek th'

bread to th' bakehaase, or goo to th' butcher's on liver day, or th' brekfust wusn't ready in time, or anythink else happent as made a lad late in gettin t'Schoo, he sav't hissel axin a lot o' questions, an quite preventit th' lad tellin any lies, by fetchin aat that Strap, an usin it at wonse. Why, I geet moor Strap o'er larnin th' Multiplication Table, than a hunderd lads in a Boord Schoo would naw-a-days get in five year. Times hes awtert. Owd-fashunt Schoomesters yust lether away at th' lads till they wus tiert. Naw, if they wollopt em hafe as mich, they'd find theirsels in th' police court, an their names in th' papers. But whether th' owd way wus as bad as some folks thinks, or whether new ways o' manidgin lads is perfection; well, I'st not say what I think abaat ather.



## “ TH’ STRANGER ON TH’ BAR.”

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Th’ mother-in-law wus seet in her own place on th’ oven side o’th’ fire ; th’ wife wus sitting opposite th’ fire ; an I wus facin th’ mother-in-law. Th’ mother-in-law wus quiet, an hardly spoke except one on us sed summut to her. Th’ wife wus, as yusyual, knittin, an I wus smookin. It wus gettin on for nine o’clock, an we wus sittin theer by th’ leet o’th’ fire, savin a candle, as th’ sayin is. Both th’ wife an me wus dooin moor thinkin than tawkin. Th’ owd woman as seet with us wus a deal in my mind, an it would no daut be th’ same with th’ wife.

As we seet theer th’ wife gen a bit of a start, an lookin at th’ fire grate, sed,

“ Aye, theer’s a stranger on th’ bar.”

Naw, I don’t know whether evrybody as’ll read this ’ll know what a stranger on th’ bar is. So I’ll try to explain it as weel as I con. Well, yo’ll a notised as sometimes there’ll be a piece o’ coal in th’ fire near to th’ bars with lots o’ gas in it. An as th’ fire gets howd on it, it begins o’ makin smook fly aat on it, like steam fro a biler, an very near as fast. An th’ little beggar of a bit o’ coal seems fort be quite praud o’th’ nise an fuss its makin, an like as if it wus munkyin th’ cob above it, as lee theer brunnin away baat makin any stir.

Sometimes, just for th' fun o'th' thing, th' lively bit o' coal 'll send its smook agen one o'th' bars, an yo'll see th' smook formin into soot, an gettin thicker an thicker, till it'll remind yo of a owd woman rappin hersel up in a thick shawl befoor hoo gus aat on a cowl day. In a while th' capers as that bit o' coal carries on are awtert. A blaze drops dawn fro th' cob above, an that smook turns into puffin, rollockin, jets of white flame, as seems as if they'd goo dancin mad at their good luck in gettin owd of a bit o' coal so rich in gas. In a short time th' little excitement's o'er, an theer's nowt left of that lively bit o' coal but a sma red sinder, as yo con only just make aat fro th' rest. It's just a illustration of what's gooin on evryday in th' world. Folks get howd of money or property, an, thinkin it 'll never be done, they bazzen at it, lettin fly in aw directions, an then befoor they'n a thowt abaat it, th' smook an flames as they'n bin sendin up, goos aat, an theer's nowt but a sinder left fort comfort em.

But abaat that stranger on th' bar. Well, if yo'll wait for a time, that soot as hes bin left on th' bar will be losent, an it'll slowly begin o' rollin itsel off that bar, till at th' last, yo'll see it hangin dawn like one o' thoos club banners on th' fust Monday in August, an movin abaat as th' cowl air gus through th' bars into th' fire. When it gets to that stage, its th' "stranger on th' bar."

Recknin by years my owd woman's fifty, if hoo's a day. But reckon by th' simple faith

as hoo hes in aw owd fashunt beleefs an sayins, hoo's hardly fifteen. Kneelin dawn on th' harthstone, hoo clapt her hands sharply t'gether, and says "Tuesday," that wus th' day after. Then th' same performance, an "Wensday," "Thursday," "Friday;" an when hoo clapt her hands an sed "Setterday," th' stranger losent itsel fro th' bar an disappeart in th' fire.

"O' Setterday we'st hev a stranger cawin," says th' owd woman, gettin up fro her knees. "I wonder who-ey it'll be."

"Dost raly think," sed I, "as theer's anythink in th' notion of a bit o' black soot bein sent on th' bar as a intimation fort look aat for a stranger on th' day as tha says, when t'manidges fort shake it off th' bar with th' wind fro the hands?"

"I'll tell thee what I don't raly think, if that 'll satisfy thee," sed hoo. "I don't raly think as I'm wiser or clivverer than aw thoos as hes lived befoor me, an dropt into their graves lung sin. Did't never see the mother do what I did then? Hestn't sin me do it times aat o' mind? An hestn't fond it come true monny a score o' times? Naw-a-days theer's to monny folk as hes only one road o' showin haw mich clivverer they are than thoos as lived befoor em, an thoos as lives along with em, an that's by makin game on, an pretendin fort not beleev, anythink as folk owder than theirsels hes beleevt aw their lives. Its asy fort laff at a notion, an its asy fort say as we don't beleev a thing, but its none so asy allus fort

show as theer's nothink in it. Tha remembers weel enough haw Sam Wepstir yust fort brag abaat not beleevin in ghosts and freetnin, but when thoos chaps geet him into th' Stonk-lone, wheer th' White Woman yust fort walk, an teed his hands an his legs fast, so as he couldn't walk, an put a rope raund him, fassenin him to th' hedge, an left him theer agen th' hedge, he sid moor freetnin in that lane than hed ever bin tawked abaat befoor. An th' chap as didn't beleev in ghosts, an sed as he'd chase th' White Woman till th' breath was aat on him, yell'd and roart, till somebody coom an losent him, so as folk a mile away could hear him. I don't say but what thar clivver enough in somethings, Jack, at leeast as men gus naw-a-days. But don't thee faw into th' mistake as aw th' owd men, an th' owd wimmen, befoor tha time, wus foos; becose ift does, tha'll make a greit mistake, an like Sam Wepstir, tha'll maybe be convinc't agen the will, that the faather an mother, an the granfaathers an gran-mothers, hed some good rason, even if tha's not fond it aat, for th' things as they pass'd on to us fro thoos as hed gon befoor em."

Th' owd woman's allus in urnist when hoo tawks that lung withaat stoppin. I wus a bit feart, as hoo went on, as hoo'd gotten th' notion as this Homely Sketchin work o' mine wus likely fort make me consated, an lead to me turning my back on th' "folk lore," as I've hed sich a likin for



aw my life. But bless her owd heart, theer isn't a bit o' fear o' that. If I'd lots o' money, an' could hev my own way, I'd serch aw o'er Lankysheer for a haase as hed no eend o' dark rooms an passidges in it, an as hed a ghost for evry room, freetnin for evry passidge, an a boggart for evry garrot. If I'd only th' power, I wouldn't let a railroad be made o'er a lane as wus haunted, nor let one goo within a mile of a haase as hed ghosts in it, for fear of drivin thoos owd inhabitants off to new places. I'd hev one o' thoos watchmen's wooden boxes made for fixing up in owd churchyards, so as at th' reet time o'th' year, I could watch th' goblin antics as gus on o'er th' gravestones. An I'd collect aw th' owd sayins as I could hear on anywheer, abaat lucky an unlucky days, an what yo should do at crisenins, an berryins, an marryins, an after yo've sneezt, or hed th' hickup, or coff't. I beleev in thees things so mich, that I should like to hear evry ghost story as could be tow'd; see th' antics of aw th' goblins as carries on in churches, an churchyards, an belfris, an steeples; an be able to write dawn aw as hes ever bin tow'd abaat lucky an unlucky days, an th' t'other things as I've mention't. But bein only Jack Bradshaw, a humble watchmaker, an moor humble Sketchist, with maaths to fill, and backs fort cover, whatever I'd like fort be, is one thing, an what I mon be, whether I will or not, is another. So I don't think theer's mich chance of me

spending my neets in churchyards, an in tumble dawn owd haases, lookin after ghosts and goblins.

I wus urnist enough in lettin th' owd woman know as I hedn't gen up my beleef in any o' thoos things as th' owd folk hed tow'd us, though I couldn't help sayin as I thowt I could remember times when no stranger hed coom, or when they coom on a different day to what they'd bin expectit, fro th' intimation gen by th' "stranger on th' bar."

"Say no moor abaat it, Jack," sed hoo. "It isn't a life time to wait till Setterday. An o' Setterday tha'll know whether that 'stranger on th' bar' hes tow'd a true tale or not."

Well I sed no moor, an we geet a tawkin abaat other matters. Setterday coom sure enough, but it hedn't browt any stranger, up to hafe past three. Abaat that time I wus givin mysel a wash in th' yard, an when I'd wipt mysel dry, comb't my hair, and put my things on, I went into th' front place to th' mother-in-law, and th' owd woman. I'd just fixt mysel with my back to th' fire, when th' street door wus opent, and in walk't "TH' WIFE'S AANT," sayin, as hoo geet a step or two fro th' door,

"D'ye do, Jack; I'm rather a stranger here, but I thought I'd call and enquire after your mother-in-law."

My owd woman coom forward with a cheer, an fixt it next to th' mother-in-law, an as hoo did so, though hoo sed nowt to

me with her tung, I could see fro th' way as hoo puckert up her face, as hoo wus axin me, in dumb langwidge, whether th' stranger hed coom or not. An th' Wife's Aant axt haw we aw wus, bein pertikkler abaat th' mother-in-law's roomatis, and her tother complaints. An while hoo's sittin theer tawkin to th' owd woman, I'll try fort tell yo who-ey th' Wife's Aant is, an what sort of a body hoo is.

Well, then, t'begin with, th' Wife's Aant isn't Aant to my wife, nor any relation to her. I couldn't tell yo haw lung this body hes bin known as th' Wife's Aant, but its monny a lung year naw sin fost owd an yung, th' qualaty an poor folk, hed only one name for her, an that wus "th' Wife's Aant." When hoo wus quite a wench hoo marrit into a lung family. I don't know haw monny brothers and sisters her husbant hed, but if they'd bin poor folk th' number would a drove their faather and mother welly mad. Moost o'th' brothers an sisters marrit, an hed famalies, but th' Wife's Aant never hed no childer. But never no woman wus fonder on em, or lik't fort be potterin abaat em, an makin em little frocks an pinafores, an briderin lung cluas for th' infants as hed just coom into th' world. Aye, but hoo wus a handy body with a needle and thrid, an her thimble, an sissors, an could cut an contrive, an make up aw sorts o' things, ather for th' mother's chilt, or for th' chilt's mother. Yo may be sure hoo never wantit for a job with sich lots o'

brother-in-laws, an sister-in-laws, as wus findin her neffews an neeces on a average of very near one a month. I hev heerd tell that in thoos days hoo wus allus cawd, "Aar Peter's Mary," by thoos in her husbant's family, but I'm not sure abaat it, becose its fifty year an moor sin thoos days. But years roll't on, an her nevvies an neeces begun a marryin an hevin childer o' their own. An it wus a husbant o' one o' thees neeces as fost gen her th' name o' th' Wife's Aant, which hes stuck to her ever sin, an will do naw as lung as hoo lives. That's what evrybody caws her, whether they're relations or not, an its moor than likely that ho'll be tawk't abaat as th' Wife's Aant for long after her gradely name's bin forgotten.

Hoo caunt be mich off eighty naw, an hoo's thin an' spare, just leining forrods a little bit, an not so sure of her legs and feet as hoo yust be. Her face is yallow with owd age, an its gotten cracks an rinkles aw o'er it. But its a happy lookin face for aw that, an thoos white curls on ather side, as just looks aat fro under her cap, sets it off nicely. Theer's two things as yo'll nearly allus see her with, her umberella an her black bag. Well I'm cawin it a black bag, but it met be a black box for anythink as I know. In shape it's quite as mich like a box as a bag, an its covered with Merican cloth, an theer's sich a homely look abaat it, as makes yo at once feel sure as th' Wife's Aant covert that bag or box hersel.

It's a wonderfully useful bag that; that is if it isn't after aw a box. Hawever I'st caw it a bag. If yo wus to open it sometimes, yo'd find a bit of a rook of lace an ribbin, an maybe a little silk hankycher, an a little roll of part-finish't wool or bead-work. That would be when th' Wife's Aant hes bin axt aat for a cup of tay. An that bit of a rook of lace an ribbins would turn aat fort be her cap, as hoo wears indoors, after hoo'd shook it aat an fixt it on her head. Th' tiny hankycher goos raund her neck, an th' work's allus browt aat when hoo's reddy for sittin dawn. Often theer'll be work of a different sort in that bag. Hoo'll be gooin to a Dorcas meetin, or to a Mother's meetin, or to a sewin doo fort raise money for a chapil or schoo, or summut o' that sort, an then that bag 'll be full o' patterns, an print, an tape, an cotton bobbins, an sich like, as'll aw be spread aat an browt into use at th' meetin. An for gettin through work hersel, an keepin other wimmim at work, both owd an yung, theer never wus sich a wonderful clivver woman as th' Wife's Aant, as is in some respects as yung an as bloomin as hoo wus abaat sixty year sin, when hoo fost marrit into that lung family. Aye, it wus a lung family then. But that generation's short enough naw, for theer isn't one left fort shake hands with the Wife's Aant. Lots o' their childer is granfaathers and granmothers naw; an th' granchilder looks up at th' owd lady with greit big wonderin,

open, eyes, as hoo tells them tales abaat granfaather's or granmother's early days; an I shouldn't be a bit surprist if some o'th' little beggars as hes gotten into th' Bible class should hev th' notion as th' Wife's Aant hes awreddy b'yetten Meth-oosalem, in th' number o' years hoo's lived, an th' things hoo's sin. An they've heerd their faathers an mothers, an granfaathers an granmothers, tawk so mich abaat th' christnins, an weddins, an berryins, an dooments of aw sorts, as th' Wife's Aant hes allus bin th' main body at, that one an aw on em expects as when they'n gotten owd, an hes childer, an granchilder, th' Wife's Aant, an her black bag, an her umberella, 'll be gooin abaat amung em, just as they dun naw.

Theer are some folk whose lives pass in sich reglar circles of yuseful work and good deeds, that owd Death owt to think, not only twice, but a thasand times, befoor he cuts em dawn, an leaves their cheers emty. But he's a unfeelin owd tyrant, baat any hart, or if he hes one, it wus made for him aat o'th' hardest flint as wus ever fond. So th' time will come when th' Wife's Aant will follow thoos as hes gone befoor her, but hoo'll leave beheend her some sweet memries, in th' harts of thoos who think so mich on her alive, an'll never stop regrettin her when hoo's gone.

## IF I'D A BIN A BARBER !

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I wus never axt, when I wus a lad what trade I should like fort be. My faather wus a watchmaker, and my granfaathers, an aw my uncles wus watchmakers, so they made a watchmaker o' me, as a matter of coorse. If they'd ever axt me I could a tow'd em of a trade as I'd a sooner bin put to, but they didn't. I'd a lik't 'ta bin a barber, an a gotten my livin by cuttin hair, an scrapin chins. I geet a greit notion of bein a barber through gooin to owd Strange's to hev my hair cut. Yo'll remember th' owd haase he lived in, with a gable to th' front o'th' street, partly bilt of wood and stone, and as wus moost likely some greit mon's property when it wus fust built moor than two hundred year befoor owd Strange went to it. Somebody as hed lived at it hed fond it to sma' for em, an they'd bilt a one-story addition to th' haase in a line with it along th' street, as quite spilt th' look o'th' place, an as hed a thacht roof as wus allus dropping waater fro it lung after a shower wus o'er.

I shall ne'er forget my fust appearance at owd Strange's. It wusn't fort get shavt yo may be sure, for I wus only abaat three year owd at th' time. I don't know who took me theer, but I remember weel enough

when we geet inside theer wus a elderly mon theer, with raather a fat an awtogether contentit looking face on him, as fixt me on a cheer, an covert me raund with a lot of print same as the wimmin's bedgawns, as they allus wore i'th' day time an took off at neet, wus made on. An he combt my hair strait aat, an then he took howd on one of my ears very gently, an axt me whether my mother hed sed as he wus fort cut a piece of my ear off. I towld him as my mother hed only sent me to hev my hair cut. Hoo'd said nowt abaat my ears. An then he pretended fort look at em, an measure th' length on em, an he sed as he thowt they met grow for some time yet, befoor they'd want cuttin; which made me sit asier in that cheer. I con recollect owd Strange as he yust th' sissors on my hair, just as if it wus only yesterday. He'd a brat on, only it wus quite different fro a watchmaker's brat. It hed no bib to it, an as for as that went, it wus like a woman's apron. But then again it wusn't like a woman's apron, becose in th' front it hed a wide pocket in it, as howded his brushes an sissors, so as he'd hev em handy when he wus cuttin hair. He'd nice chatty ways with him, both with childer an grown up folk. He wusn't like a many o'th' barbers naw-a-days, as hes gen yo their opinion abaat Disrally's foreign policy, Rooshay's next move, an th' disturbances in Ireland, befoor they'n gotten th' lather on your face. He never pretended fort know anythink abaat sich matters.



But he wus a good mester of sma' tawk, when he'd customers in as look't for it. An when th' place wus full, as it yust fort be on Setterday an Monday neets, he could make his sma' tawk goo a good way, baat interfering with his shavin in th' quickest fashun. He pickt up a good deal o' money by dressing wigs, and wimmen's fause fronts, as yust be worn in thoos days.

As I wus in that cheer hevin my hair cut, there wus a seet on a little shelf o'er th' door as I dursn't look to mich at. I took em for dead men's heads as owd Strange hed gotten aat o'th' churchyard, after they'd bin knockin abaat for some time, an gotten th' hair rubbed off, an damidged abaat th' faces. They wusn't like skulls; but like heads chopt off at th' neck, as met a bin sent dawn to th' mughaase fort hev th' flesh dried on em hard, which would akount for their bein in colour so like dirty ponmugs. Theer wus five or six on em awtogether, an though th' faces wus so wore an aat o' shape, every one on em look't to me as if they'd summat they'd like fort say, if their maaths hedn't bin made up. I wondert whether they'd bin tawn's folk, an knowd owd Strange, an th' men as went theer fort be shavt, or whether he'd bin pertickler in gotten th' heads of strangers as hed bin sent here fort be berrit. An agen I wondert whether this place hed allus bin a barber's shop, and if it hed, whether when one barber deed, his head wus preservt an kept by th' mon as followt him. An then I

compart th' shape of owd Strange's head with thoos on th' shelf, an I couldn't help notisin, as his would be th' biggest o'th' lot if ever it wus stuck up theer with th' rest. But then if they did tek thoos heads dawn to th' mughaase oven fort be baked or dried, I didn't know whether they metn't *run in*, an come aat of a less size. But what owd Strange wantit with thoos heads I couldn't think. He couldn't practice on em when work was slack, becose sich dried up flesh as that would never grow any hair on ather th' face, or skull. An owd Strange wusn't like th' barbers naw-a-days as hes bottles o' stuff as they'll warrant fort make hair grow on th' head of a beer barrel, if yo'll only keep rubbin it in. He'd a shavt ye or cut yer hair aw yer life withaat ever recomend-in anythink fort cure bawdness or make hair grow thicker. Th' only thing as he hed abaat th' place in any way like that, was a little hair ile as he made fort smell nice ; an I wus gettin a good big lad befoor he gen o'er tellin me, haw nice I smelt, after he'd finisht cuttin my hair, an he'd rubbed some o' that ile on my head.

He lived a very quiet harmless life, did owd Strange, and when he deed, an his relahuns fond aat what money he'd made, an as he'd divided it very fairly amung em, th' bisens wus sowd to another mon as took it just as it stood.

Naw if I could a hed what I wantit, an aar folk could a gotten owd Strange to hev took me for a prentis, it's moor than likely as I

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should a dropt into his shop when he deed, an I should then a bin in th' line of life as I've allus thowt as I wus fitted for. That chap as geet th' bisens wus a owd cove abaat sixty, as hed bin a barber aw his life, an his faather one befoor him. But he'd never any bisens t'a bin anythink o'th sort. He wus a example o'th folly of a mon puttin his son to his own trade withaat tryin fort find aat whether th' lad's fitted for it or not. Naw nob'dy could a bin moor unfitted for shavin an hair cuttin than that owd fellow wus. A barber may hev to mich to say, an moost on em hes ; but then a chap as caunt or waint open his maath, gus to for in another direction. One as caunt say, "'Mornin,'" to a customer, baat lookin as if he wus gooin to be chok't o'er it, wusn't intended for a barber. As th' chaps seet raund th' place in owd Strange's time waitin for their turn, they yust fort talk one with another quite lively and friendly, an Strange would a jint in evry naw an again, just fort a kept th' talk up, so as it wouldn't a seemt so lung, fort wait o' one anuther. But th' place wus quite different after he wus gone. At fust men went in an seet dawn an begun tawkin as they'd bin yust to doin ; but never any saund come fro that owd fellow with th' razer in his hand. If they gen him th' penny in his hand when he'd finish't, he yust fort make some sort of a quiet grunt low dawn in his throat ; but if th' penny wus put dawn on th' table yo couldn't hear anythink fro him. An if th' company

geet any ways lively in their tawk, he'd a way o' starin at em, with a sort of freetent an wild look on his face, as pood em up short. In a short time that barber's shop wus like a Quaker's meetin, when nob'dy's moved fort say anythink. Evrybody else wus so quiet that when th' owd chap did his low grunt on gettin a penny, evrybody could hear it plain. But owd Strange's customers couldn't get yust to this new fashun as hed coom o'er th' place, an as a new barber hed took a place near to, they begun a leaving th' owd place, an gooin to th' new mon as could both tawk an would let his customers tawk too. An in a while th' bisnes wus for sale agen, for this owd fellow as hed fust lost his tung, an then his customers, lost his breath at last, an went even quieter than he'd bin when livin.

Folk may say as its owin to th' pride as I've gotten in me sin I become a litterrary mon, but I caunt help sayin as I think theer wus a fust-rate barber spoilt when they made a watchmaker o' me. One o'th' moost objecshunable things abaat barbers is as they will stick theersels up fort be sich fust-rate pollytishuns. They tekken in a daily paper, an they read it o'er, a purpose fort stuff theersels reddy for th' fust customer as comes in, an when they'n gotten him so as he caunt run away till th' job's finisht, they goo at him ding dong abaat things as th' barber knows as mich abaat as his striped pow does, as is fixt aatside, only unlike that strip'd pow, he doesn't keep

quiet abaat em. Well naw, theer'd be nothink of that sort abaat me. I've no objecshuns fort tawk abaat things as I think I've larnt summat abaat, but nather as a watchmaker nor as a barber, should I bother folk abaat a lot o' things as I knowd nowt abaat. Nor I shouldn't go in for bottles of stuff for bringin hair back agen on bare heads; nor stuff for strengthnin hair; nor stuff for changin its color; becose I don't think as theer's a plesunt jingle abaat money as is made by gammonin an humbuggin folk. An what is it but gammon an humbug, fort get howd of a owd mon or a owd woman with a bare head, an perswade em if they'll only use th' celebrated Hair-producin-never-failin-Specific, mornin, noon, an neet, lung anough, they're sure fort hev their heads covert with hair like they hed when they wus childer? What would be thowt of anybody as pretendit fort hev a bottle as would make owd folks' teeth come again? Why theer's nather a barber nor a tooth drawer in aw th' country as would hev th' cheek an impidence in em, fort puff off sich a bottle as that. Naw doesn't it stand to rason that ather a barber or a tooth drawer could just as asy find aat summat as would make teeth grow agen, as summat fort make hair grow agen. To my thinkin one would be just as asy as th' tother. But I reckon folk mon be waker abaat their heads than their maaths, or we should a hed a bottle for makin teeth come agen befoor naw.

Naw a barber, like evry other mon as hes took up with a bisens, should hev a pride in doin his work so as it caunt be b'yetten by anybody. An if I'd a bin put to a barber when I wus a lad, I should hev hed as mich pride in shavin, an hair cuttin, an moor, than I ever hed in watchmakin. An for a good rason too. If I spile my work, or botch my work, it doesn't spile anybody's appeerunce, or make their faces smart as if they'd bin pickl't in vinegur. But haw is it with a barber's work? Yo gun into his shop an yo ax fort hev yer hair cut. Well, he tells yo fort sit dawn, an yo dun. Then he brings his sheet aat, an puts it raund yo. But befor he's gotten that for, he's begun abaat news an pollyticks, or summat or another as he's bin readin in that penny paper. When yo've a chance, if yo ever get one, yo tell him yo don't want mich cuttin off. An he says, "Yissir," awmoost baat stoppin his tale. An he begins a sawin away at yer hair, jabberin of what he knows nowt abaat, insted o' thinkin o' what he's doin, till he's gotten one side o' yore head with th' hair cut dawn to th' roots. If yo putten up yer hand, and yo find aat what he's done, it's to late fort mend it. Yore oblig't fort hev th' tother side cut dawn as short, or yo'd be so lobsided yo'd not be able fort walk strait. An then fort hev that chap tellin yo as he doesn't think it's to short, when he couldn't a gotten any moor off, baat he'd pood it up by th' roots. Aggravatin isn't

hafe strung anough a word fort use. Yo met be excuse't for droppin d's aat of yer maath for hafe an hour. An then only think what some on em's up to o'er shavin yo. It's not sich a asy matter for a watch-maker as teks snuff, as so monny on us does, fort keep aar maaths shut for five minutes. An yet when we're bein lothert, every time th' lips opens a bit, in gus that brush between em, an aw as yo'll get aat o' th' barber 'll be, "Yo should keep yer maath shut." An then when th' lother brush is took away, an he begins a rubbin with two fingers it's wos still, for th' fingers gus further in yer maath than th' brush does. An that's not aw, for haw monny times does it happen as th' razer waint fetch th' beerd off baat he gets fast howd on yer nose, and poos away till yo're feart as hafe yer face 'll come off. An they cawn that shavin ye! It's my opinyun that in owd-fashunt times they'd a cawd it torcherin ye, an they'd a hed good ground for sayin so.

Naw a mon like me with a natcheral gift an likin for th' work, would nather a torchert folks ears nor faces, nor a gen em a prison crop when they wantit their hair shortenin a bit. I don't want fort say a word agen my faather an mother, nor I wain't; but I cawn't help thinkin as theer's a deal of sufferin in barbers' shops as theer wouldn't a bin if aar folk hed a gone to owd Strange an perswaded him fort hev a prentis. By this time I should a bin known far an near as th' sensible barber as didn't mither folks

ears with pollyticks, nor bother em abaat hair ristorers and dies, an as didn't lother both th' inside an aatside of their maaths, nor send em whomm feelin like as if they'd bin shavt with a nugmeg grater. Life would a bin woth livin for then. Becose its not a mon bein in a greit position, an hevin folk bowin and scraping to him, as makes a mon's life useful an pleasant to hissels an others. Its doin work, whatever it may be, weel, an hevin a pride in doin it weel, as makes a yuseful life, as brings contentment to th' mon, an advantage to thoos as he rubs shooders agen. Hawever, though I mist my tip in not bein prentist to a barber, I've tried to do th' best I could as a watchmaker, an I never heerd yet as any o'th' watchmakers hed mich fort say agen Jack Bradshaw beheend his back, though I'm like't confess as, to his face, they'n often enough tried fort rile him. But then that's only fort keep him fro gettin to prodigal. So even that shows some good feelin.





## OWD KEIPER'S WILL.

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A monny of my tales is abaat folk as yo hen to scrat yer hed a good while befoor yo can bring em to mind agen. Owd Keiper 'll one o' that sort. Yo'll remember him in time, but not aw at wonse, I should say. For he's bin dead moor years a deal than yo could caunt on yer fingers. Hawever, he did live in aar time, an yo'll know summat abaat him, an'll be able fort say as thees Homely Sketches is'nt romansis, but true tales abaat folk an things as hes lived an happent in thees parts.

Owd Keiper wus ne'er o' mich akaunt ather yung or middleag'd. I never heerd anything remarkable abaat him but one thing, an that wus what gen him his name. When he wus a lad, an a yung mon, he took th' fost prize at aw th' fairs raund abaat th' country, for keipin an grinnin through a horse collar. Evrybody geet to cawin him Keiper, which wus ne'er awtert. Only when he geet into years, insted o' bein Keiper, they geet to cawin him Owd Keiper.

He wus never nowt but a lab'rin mon; an yust fort work abaat th' Haw. He seed to th' kitchen fires; made em in a mornin, an kept a stock of coal near em aw day; an did any sort of odd jobs as wus wantit t'be done by th' cook or wimmen sarvents.

Some folks thowt he'd a asy shop; but theer wus a deal wantit doin abaat a big place like that; an he wus nearly allus tiert enough, when th' time coom for him t' be makin his way whomm at neet. He'd only twelve shillin a wick wages, but then theer wus bits of meit an vegetables as he hed gen him; an aw helpt fort make him a comfortable livin. An so it wus as by savin ways, him an his wife, with hevin no childer, hed manidg'd fort put by a bit of money. An th' steward hed gotten this money put aat to intrist for th' owd folk. He kept workin away abaat th' Haw, doin what he could, till he wus abaat sixty-five, when work coom so hard on him, an he wus so wake in his limbs, as they tow'd him one day as he wus gettin past work, an he must give it up, an as they'd allow him a penshun of five shillin a wick, as lung as ather him or his owd woman lived. It hedn't a good effect on Owd Keiper, this bein penshunt. It seemt to him like bein tow'd t' go whomm an dee. He went whomm an wus ill for a lung time, but he coom raund agen. He wusn't any ways badly off. For money he wus better off than he'd ever bin in his life. Theer wus his penshun of five shillin, he geet eight shillin a wick fro his club, an this money as he hed at intrist browt him in better than five shillin a wick moor. When he'd drawd his eight shillin a wick fro th' club for a year, they penshunt him off with hafe-a-crown a wick, which made his livin then, summut

o'er twelve-an-sixpence a wick ; which wusn't bad for th' owd folk.

He'd bin penshunt abaat three year when th' wife died, an th' owd chap was left by hissels. He tried fort do for hissels for a while, but he fond aat as a owd mon, in a bit of a cottage by hissels, wus in th' wrung place, so he agreed fort goo an lodge with a marrid neffew, o'th' name of Bill Baaron, as hed a dacent sort of a haase, with not to monny childer. Bill wus summut an fain fort get Owd Keiper fort come an live with him. He know'd th' owd chap hed some money aat at intrist, an he thowt he should stand a good chance of gettin howd of that money, after th' owd chap's death, by livin in th' same haase with him. So he made up his mind fort make Owd Keiper as comfortable as he could, so as t'hev a good chance of creepin up th' owd fellow's sleeve. But theer wus a deal moor neffews an neeces, an thees aw thowt, as Bill Baaron did, what a good thing it would be to creep up this owd fellow's sleeve, an hev some on his money fort remember him by. Bill Baaron's haase wus never free fro one or another of thees cuzons of his, as thowt so mich of their owd uncle, they couldn't get into th' next street, baat comin a bit further, fort ax haw he wus. As time went on, an he never leet on haw his money wus fort goo after his death, they geet very impashunt, an rather jealous of Bill Baaron, thinkin as maybe he'd made hissels aw reet with th' owd mon. At last two or three on

em agreed fort goo t'gether an tawk to Owd Keiper abaat life at his years bein very uncertain, an haw rekwisit it wus, for thoos as hed anythink fort leave beheend em, fort hev it in black an white haw it wus fort goo. So they hed a tawk of this sort with th' owd mon. He agreed with nearly aw they sed. Sed it wus very reet an proper, an it wus true anough, he met be cut off at any minit. He knowd it, an he hoped he should be fond prepart when th' time coom. But this wusn't haw they wantid him fort tawk at aw. They wantit fort know haw he wus leaving his money. So at last one on em reminded him as he'd gotten money aat at intrist, an if he wantit anybody per-tikkler fort share in that money, he'd hev fort make a bit of a will, as would say whoey they wus as must hev this money when he wus gone. Owd Keiper didn't like bein tawked to in that fashun, but as they stuck to him, he sed at last, in a short sort of a way,

"I'st leev beheend me, haw its fort be."

They tried fort get moor aat on him, but they fond it wus o' no yuse. He only sed agen, what he'd sed befoor.

So theer wus none on em, not even Bill Baaron, as knowd haw Owd Keiper's money would go after he'd deed. Though Bill incorridgt th' hope as th' money would come to him, as th' owd chap hed took up with livin with him.

Owd Keiper deed at last, as owd folk hed done for thasands of years befoor him. An

his club money wus drawd by Bill Baaron, an th' owd chap wus berrit. An th' owd chap's traps wus examint an sercht very closely, but they couldn't find any paper written on, as they could make aat fort be a will.

Some on em sed as theer wus no will, an as they wus th' owd mon's relashuns, th' money hed better be drawd in, an then divided share and share alike. But Bill Baaron sed that wouldn't be reet. Th' owd mon hed deed with him, an if theer wus no will, that made him next o' kin, as th' law gen ervythink to.

An then tothers sed if he wus gooint tawk abaat law like that, an try fort tek evrythink, they'd hev law too, an see if they couldn't get their reets. So that meetin wus broke up with bad feelin amung em.

An Bill Baaron's cuzons went to a turney an stated their case to him, an he towd em as they'd as mich reet to Keiper's money as Baaron hed, an he'd get em their reets if they'd leev things with him. An he wrote a letter to Baaron tellin him as one o'th' cuzons would goo into one o'th' courts an ax for power fort deal with Owd Keiper's estate, an as he musn't dispose of, or part with anythink as th' owd mon hed left till this court made th' order.

So then, Bill Baaron went of to another turney with this letter an towd him his tale. This one towd Baaron as he'd soon stop th' capers as tothers wus up to. Bill's case should goo to th' same court, an th' tothers

would find aat haw it would be then. Just let Baaron leev it to him, an he'd find it would come aat aw reet. Bill Baaron liket this sort of tawk; an he felt sure he should get that money whatever th' tothers should do.

A day or two after he'd bin with his turney, Bill wus fillin his pipe aat of a owd iron bacco box as hed belongt to Owd Keiper. Theer wus only as mich bacco in th' box as fild th' pipe, so after he'd gotten it aat, Bill notist as th' bottom o'th' box wus lined with paper, an gettin his finger nail under th' paper, he poo'd it aat an lookt at it. When he seed what wus on that paper, he hardly know'd haw fort howd hissel. It wus Owd Keiper's Will! Theer it wus writ dawn in th' owd chap's own writin,

*Bill Baaron mon  
heer it hissel  
owd keiper.*

Bill took th' will streit off to his turney, an towd him wheer he'd fond it, an as th' owd mon hed towd th' tothers as he should leev beheend him haw his money should goo. An th' turney rubbed his hands in greit glee, an sed as he thowt they should fix em

naw. Bill must leev this will with him, an he'd hear fro him soon.

An then this game of lawin one another went on in good urnist. Th' turneys wrote letters by th' score, an sent em off to aw th' relashuns of Owd Keiper. An theer wus sheets upo sheets o' lawyers' paper, covert aw o'er with writin, an thees wus read o'er to th' relashuns, an they hed fort kiss th' book, an put their names to em. An they hed fort bethink em wheer their faathers an mothers hed bin marrit at, an wheer they'd bin chrisent theirsels.

Th' turney on Bill's side, with aw this work, wus tryin fort make aat as Owd Keiper hed allus indicated as Bill Baaron wus fort hev th' money, an as he'd tow'd th' tothers as he should leev beheend him a paper as would say so, an as this paper, as hed bin fond in his bacco box, wus raly his will, as give to Bill Baaron aw as he hed to leev.

Th' turney for th' tothers laft at this, an sed as haw it wus plain that if Owd Keiper raly hed wrote what wus on that paper, aw as he ment by it wus that Bill should hev that bacco box, an he'd gotten it, an owt t'be satisfied.

At last Owd Keiper's case coom into that court, an after a good deal of tawking on both sides, th' court made a order; but whether he'd won or lost, nather Bill Baaron nor any o'th' relashuns hed any notion. Bill's turney tow'd him he wus a moost lucky mon, for th' case wus finisht,

an theer'd be nowt but gettin in th' money an payin it. Th' quare thing wus that this wus abaas th' same as th' tother turney towd th' cuzons. So Bill Baaron thowt he'd won, an he wus rare an glad abaas it. An th' cuzons thowt they'd won, an they wus as glad as Bill wus.

Twothry wick after, aw Owd Keiper's relashuns geet notice fort meet at a certain time at th' offiss of th' turney as Bill Baaron went to. They wus in summot of a flutter when they went to that meeting. Aw on em expected fort come aat o' that offiss with a pocket full o' money. When they wus let into th' room, both of thoos turneys as hed bin employed wus theer, sittin at a table as wus covert fro one eend to another with papers. When they'd gotten seet dawn, Bill's turney begun a tawkin. He towd em he wus glad fort say as their disputes had terminated withaas any on em bein likely fort lose anythink by goin to law.

Bill Baaron liked this. If he wusn't gooin t'lose anythink by gooin to law, then th' money must be comin to him. Theer wus no other way o' lookin at it. An aw th' cuzons lik't it just as weel, becose if they wusn't gooin to lose anythink, then they'd aw be comin in for a share o'th' money.

An then this turney went on a readin bills of costs, an explainin haw money hed gone a thisens an a thatens, till at last he coom to tellin on em as th' Court hed sed as Bill Baaron must hev th' bacco box to



hissel, baat bein cawd on fort divide it with anybody; but as for th' money, after aw th' expenses hed bin paid, it hed fort be divided aqually, share an share alike, between th' neffews an neeces an their childer. This he sed hed bin done. Th' expenses hed bin paid, an th' balance hed bin divided as th' court hed ordered, an theer would be the sum of fivepence hapenny a piece for em.

So they hed fort teck fivepence hapenny a piece as their fortin comin fro Owd Keiper. They wus dumb enough, when they wus in that turney's office, but they'd enough fort say when they geet aatside. Yo couldn't perswade any o' that lot fort go to law agen, not if yo towed em theer wus millions belingin to em.

Bill Baaron yust fort say if it hed fort be done o'er agen, he'd sooner let th' cuzons hev both th' money an th' bacco box, then let it aw goo in law. An th' cuzons yust fort say summat very like it. I never heerd tell whether any moor relashuns o' their's deed with money aat at intrist. But if theer wus, I don't think as any o' that lot would go to law agen fort get theer reets. They allus tawkt as if they'd hed quite enough with wonst tryin.

Theer yust be folk as cried shame on thoos two turneys for lettin aw Owd Keiper's money goo in th' way it did; that is aw but fivepence hapenny a piece. They sed if that wus law, th' country would be better baat turneys, an law, an lawyers, an courts,

if poor folk geet sarv't that way by em. But that's tawkin baat thowt. What would Bill Baaron, or thoos relashuns a thowt, if theer'd bin nather lawyers nor law for em t'a run to, when they fawd aat abaat th' money? They'd a getten to feightin with their fists, or with sticks, or pokers, maybe, tryin fort get their reets in that fashun. If there'd a bin no turney's offiss for em t'a run to, they'd a bin runnin at one another. An then there'd a bin black eyes, an bloody noses, an smasht faces, an very likely brokken arms an legs, an insted of hevin th' quarril o'er in abaat three months, they'd a bin at their feightin evry time they'd met as lung as they lived; an moost likely their childer would a kept up th' owd feelin after their faathers was dead. As it wus with hevin law fort go to, an with their gooin to it, they hed a lot o' plesunt excitement till th' case wus o'er. An though they wus aw mad an disappointed when they fond theer wus only fivpence hapenny a piece for em, as they wus aw in one trubble, they soon geet friendly agen, an they wus aw a deal moor knowin as to th' best way for a mon to get his reets, than they wus befoor they went to thoos turneys.

An thoos turneys too, an th' chaps' with th' wigs on, arn't they better imply'd gettin folk fort to go to law with one another, than they would be if we hed no law, an they geet their livin by gooin abaat th' country haggin folk on fort get what they wantit by plunderin an feightin? Why if we hedn't

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turneys, an law, an courts, aw th' country would be like th' borders of England and Scotland yust t'be, three or four hundred year sin. Nob'dy'd be able fort hev anythink, as they wusn't strung anough fort keep agen aw comers. That would be a time for evry mon's haase bein his castle. An he'd hev fort hev it bilt as strung as a castle too, or he'd stand a good chance of bein turnt aat on it any day, an aw as belangt to him bein carrit off. I don't say but what it wus bad an awkert for th' relashuns, for Owd Keiper's money fort go as it did. But for aw that, it would be woss for us evry way if theer wus no law in th' country. So when th' law seems fort goo a bit quare an unjust, it's not weel fort be in a horry fort blame th' turneys an lawyers. Theer's no doubt we're bad anough sometimes with em, but tekkin evrythink into akaunt, I don't think but what we should be woss off withaat em. So let em flourish; only don't yo ever goo near a turney's offiss fort get yer reets, if yo con get em any other way in th' world, or if yo waint dee fro starvation through missin em. That's my advice, an yo con ather tek it, or leev it, which ever yo liken.



## POOING AGEN IT.

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I don't think as I wus ever moor glad fort hear of anythink than I wus fort hear as Letherum, as lives near to us, hed took up an sine't th' pledge, as he'd never taste any moor ale, or sperits, or anythink as would make a mon drunk. He'd bin poor, an pinch't, and starv't, ever sin he'd bin marrit, an aw becose evry naw an again, he must hev his bost aat, an goo on th' fuddle. An bein a marrit mon with a family, he wusn't poor, an pitch't, an starv't by hissels, for thoos as belangt to him hed fort suffer with him. But even when he wus on th' fuddle, he never wus a bad sort of a mon. Yo'd never hear of his kickin up a row in a public haase, or a whomm; or of his b'yerrin his wife or his childer. An if yo watcht him gooin along th' street, when he wus weel fuddlet, he look't, in th' face, like a chap as wus up to one o'th' jollyist larks as yo'd ever heerd tell on. Yo couldn't help thinkin, as yo sid his face covert aw o'er with smiles, as, if he wusn't tryin his best agen it, he'd hev fort stop an do a lung horse laff, as would double him up till he geet o'er it. Monny a score o' folk as hes met him in th' street, hes stopt an lookt after him, an sed to theirsels,

"That chap's heerd summut as hes divirted him."

Theer wus folks as yust fort say as Letherum wus one o' thoos as good licker wusn't throwd away on. An they sed so, becose of his allus lookin so weel pleest with hissel an so divirtit, as lung as he wus on th' fuddle. That may be here or theer, or nather here or theer. But any ways, it wus a bad job for Letherum, an his wife, an his childer, as thoos fuddles coom so often, an lasted so lung.

I hev known men as lookt as jolly an good tempert when they wus in drink, as Lettherum yust do, but when they took up, nather one body nor another could do reet for em. Th' wife an childer would be abu'st an blowd up moor reglar than they'd get their meals; an th' chaps would be so aat o' temper with evrybody as they coom near, that when they did goo on th' spree agen, thoos abaat em wusn't awtogether sorry, becose o'th' plesent change as it made in their tempers. But it mon be recorded to Letherum's credit, as his sober temper wus as good as his fuddlin temper, an so it wus no relief to anybody, but a greit regret, when he startit of another doo.

I don't think as theer wus one mon in th' naburhood as hed any notion in th' world, as Letherum would ever sine th' pledge. I don't think as anybody considert it woth while wastin their breath fort tawk to him abaat it. They'd hev expectit another deludg fort come, befoor they'd hev expectit as Letherum would a put th' glass dawn, an sed he'd never hev no moor. But he

did, an he's kept to it that lung naw, that folk would be welly as mich surprist fort hear as he'd broke aat agen, as they wus when they heard as he'd turnt teetotal.

Letherum's bin a very quiet teetotaller. I don't think as he's bin to any meetins, or ever tried fort make any o' thoos as he yust fort fuddle with, come o'er to his new habit. But he's hed his thowts gooin through his mind for aw that, as I fond aat th' other neet, when he surprist me by cawin in, an axin me wether I'd a bit o' time fort spare, as he wantit fort hev a bit of a tawk with me, if I wusn't to busy.

I wus rather busy as it happent, for I'd only just startit of "Owd Keiper's Will," abaat th' time as it should a bin with th' printers. But hawever, I towd him I thowt I could spare him hafe-an-hour, if that would do for him.

He sed he thowt it would, an he went on fort tell what it wus as hed browt him to me.

"Tha knows," sed he, "what a chap I yust be for gooin on th' fuddle. Haw I yust leev my work, an goo fro one public-haase to another, till I'd gotten so soaked with drink, I'd hard work fort stagger whomm an sleep it off. Though tha waint know what a lot o' trubble, an misry, an want, thoos fuddles o' mine browt on me, and th' wife, an childer. I've bin so ill for a wick or moor after a fuddle, when I've pulled up short, an begun o' my work agen, that I don't think I could a gone through

moor, if I'd bin took with aw sorts of illnusses, an hed bin sent to a hospittle, an hed abaat fifty yung doctors a practissin on me. It wusn't only th' drink as I'd hed. Very often theer wus nowt fort be gotten fort eight for ather me or th' tothers, till I'd gotten some work aat o' my fingers. Ift ever hes one turn of hevin fort work with a splittin headache, an aw the limbs aat o' jint an tremblin, befoor tha mon hev a bite o' bread, or a drink o' tay, tha'll never want another, I tell thee. I never once coom aat of a spree, baat thinkin as a chap like me, suffert moor in twelve months fro fuddlin, than thoos chaps does as gets seven year pennle sarvitute for steilin. I often yust fort think haw crazy I wus actin both towart mysel an thoos abaat me. An yet, when th' time coom agen, I wus at th' drink once moor, never stoppin till I'd yust mysel up, an evrythink abaat me. Th' moost miserable feelin as I hed, wus when I thowt as th' drink hed gotten sich howd o' me, as I should never get th' better on it. When I've bin as sober as a judge, an sittin a whomm, as other folk would think, comfortable an happy, I yust t'feel, just as I should think a chap would feel, as wus chaint to a barrel o' beer. If I'd bin sober, an never tastit ale for a fortnit, I could allus like as if I could hear a whisper in my ear, 'Tha'll hev t'go to it agen, Letherum.'"

"Ift felt like that," sed I, "I don't know haw tha ever broke thesel off it. Becose it seems to me, like as if tha'd no strength o'

mind left, but hed browt thesel dawn till tha'd become a slave to drink both in body an mind."

"So I hed," sed he, "so I hed. I'd goo on aw reet for a time, an then th' thowt of a fuddle would come into my head, an I wus like as if I wus marched off to th' ale haase, whether I would or not. Monny an monny a time, I felt as if I should a bost aat a laffin in th' street, or in th' ale-haase, when I thowt o'th' figure I should cut befor folk, if they only knowd as I wus moor of a slave to drink, an to th' beer barrel, than any o' thoos blackamoors ever wus to their white mesters. If there'd bin a rope fast raund my waist, I couldn't a felt mysel pood harder into th' next public-haase, than I yust feel. Hawever, th' settlin dawn agen kept gooin harder an harder evry time. I couldn't tell thee, an tha couldn't imadgin it in the mind, what I went through for a wick after evry fuddle, towart th' last on em. I've a notion as purgatory would be rest to it. But one day when I rested my head on th' bench, for it felt inside just like as if a thasand drink divvles wus hevin a feight inside of it, summat seemt fort whisper in my ear, 'Letherum, dost think tha'd feel as bad as this, in a wick or two, ift wus fort goo dawn on the knees, an swear as tha'd never hev a drop moor drink as lung ast' lived?' Bad as I wus—an I wus bad I con tell thee, Jack—I straitened mysel up, an slapt my leg, an sed to mysel, 'By th' Lord Harry;



that's notion.' Hedn't I felt haw that ale pood at me for another fuddle? an haw thoos beer barrils seemt fort be chaint to me, so as I could never get away fro em, but they'd follow, draggin at me wheerever I went. 'But what o' that then?' I axt mysel. 'They never filled me aw o'er with akes an pains, nor fire't my head an split it open, while they hed fort poo. I've browt mysel, evry time, into this state by not pooin harder than they did.' An then I sed to mysel. 'If th' good Lord 'll only help me, I'll poo agen that ale, an agen thoos beer barrils, evry day as I live, till I faw dawn with a wos head than I've gotten naw, sooner than let em aat poo me agen.'"

"I'm glad fort hear the tale, lad," I sed. "An I hope as th' good Lord, as tha turnt to in th' time o' the distress, 'll give thee strength fort aat poo aw th' ale, an beer barrils, an drink divvls, between here an a place as we waint say owt abaat."

"Well naw, I'll tell thee, Jack, what made me come here fort hev a tawk with thee. I've gotten aw th' back numbers o'th' paper as tha Letters an Sketches hes bin printed in. An tha knows in some on em, tha's raather bin hard on folk as hes wantit thee fort be a teetotaller like I am, an like others. Well, I thowt to mysel, if Jack Bradshaw only knowd what a hard struggle some men hed when they wus poo-poo-pooing agen drink, fort keep theirsels aat on its clutches, he'd maybe hev moor pashence, with some on em as keeps botherin at him fort drink

no moor, than he hes. So tha sis I made my mind up fort give thee a caw, an just let thee hear my story. I've never axt anybody fort give up drink, sin I gen it up mysel. An I'll tell thee why. Moor or less its bin a case of pooin hard ever sin I gen up th' drink, an I dare say I'st hev to poo hard to th' eend; for I couldn't trust mysel th' leest, if I wus fort give o'er pooin. But theer's thoos as isn't like me. They'n brokken th' chains as they wus fastent with, and they caunt rest baat doing everythink as they thinken possible fort breik th' chains as howds other folk. Naw when chaps as is weel meanin, if they're not wise, bothers thee abaat bein teetotal for a example to other folk, don't get vext with em, an fire up, an tell em strait aat to their faces, as tha wain't do owt o'th' sort, but just tawk quiet an civil to em, an think to thesel, that, if thoos chaps only brings one poor fellow, as is like I wus, fort be sober an dacent livin, they'll hev some claim on folks' gratitude, an tha'll not make mich of a mistake in yusin up a bit o' the pashence whent' comes across em."

An Letherum went of an left me thinkin abaat him an th' folk as he'd coom fort speik abaat. An I did hev moor pashence with both teetotallers and everybody else for a day or two, till one on em as hed bin at me monny a time befoor, coom in at neet an seet hissel dawn baat waitin fort be axt, an begun o' some of his owd arguments abaat drink an drinkin. For some time,

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like Letherum, I kept pooin away fort not lose my pashence; but I gen in at th' last. When a chap'll sit theer an tell ye, that if God hed intended ye fort drink ale; ale would a bin fond in brooks, or rivers, or springs, or it would naw an agen hev raint ale; but becoes it hesn't bin fond like that, its a sin fort hev anythink to do with it; why sich tawk's gooin reet strait agen what we hev written in th' best Book. It wus laid down, as only by th' swet of aar brows wus we ather to eight or drink. But if this chap's reet, then we owt not fort taste bread, till loaves faws fro th' sky; nor bacon, till we con find collops hangin on th' hedges; nor tay, nor coffee, till they come as he ses ale would come, if we owt to drink it. An I'll be hanged if I know whether we owt fort live in haases till they jumpen aat o'th' graund like mushrooms; nor wear cluas, till th' sheep casts off kuats, waiskuts, and trasurs, for us evry spring time. Sich tawk as that chap indulgt in wus to mich for me. Poo as hard as I could, I couldn't keep my pashence. So I just leet aat on him fare an square, an towd him as I'd be willin fort walk to Jeroosalum an back, with peis in my shoos, fort help a chap like Letherum fort keep his resolution. But as to sich a crazy chap as him, th' only thing as I could say wus, as I'd be willin fort carry him on my back to Jeroosalum or further, if anybody'd be bun with him as he'd nee'r come back fort trouble us any moor with his notions.

## GERRIN A HANDY LAD.

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A owd chap, as hed maybe never bin a lad hissel, yust fort say, "Whenever t'meets a lad, B'YER HIM!" An he gen, what he thowt fort be, a good rason for his advice. He sed yo could make yo're mind up as to this; that if that lad wusn't comin streit fro some mischivus trick or another, he'd be into one befoor yer eyes wus off him a minit. So yo'd not be wrung in b'yerin him, so haw it wus. I don't, hawever, think that owd chap's advice wus good; becose if a lad wus fort be b'yetten evry time as he coom near to a mon, whether he'd bin doin anythink amis or not, theer wouldn't be a good lad in th' country; they'd aw goo wrung aat o' contrarynuss, an becose they'd be sure t'be punisht shus haw they behav't thoirsels.

But theer caunt be any daut as theer's a deal abaat lads as is very tryin to men. They'n yung heads on their shooders; they're thowtless, an allus forgettin what they should remember; an rememberin summat yo hoped they'd forgotten. If yo hen fort teich em a trade, they welly driven yo wild for th' fost three or four year, with shapelusness, an needlusness, an forgettin what yo'ne dinned into em a thasand times. Theer's only one thing as keeps a bit o'

pashunce left to th' mon as hes fort teich a lad his trade, an that is th' memry o'th' time when he wus a lad hissel, an very likely as mich of a numskull, as th' aggravatin yung raskill, as he hes naw under him.

But, whatever con be sed agen lads, it'll be alow'd, as we couldn't get on very weel withaat em. Whatever would th' wenches, as is growin up alungside on em, say, if theer wus no lads in some years' time for em to walk aat with, an koort with, an marry with? They'd hev a very strung beleef, an they'd aat with it too, as they'd coom into th' world at a very unconvanient time, an as they'd rather a changt places with their mothers, or granmothers, than a bin sarv't aat like that! But if we kar't nothink abaat th' wenches, we couldn't do baat th' lads. Who must we get fort run th' arunds?—though, when I come fort think abaat it, theer's not monny lads as does *run* o' arunds naw. They'll walk o' arunds, an they'll creep o' arunds, an they'll play o' arunds; but as for *runnin*, I think *runnin* arund lads, an *runnin* footmen, hes both gone aat this lung time. But baat lads we couldn't get lots o' jobs done, as they done; becose it wouldn't pay fort set men to em. So hawever needlus, an aggravatin, an thowtless, they are, we caunt do baat em; so we hen to put up with em, with as good an appeerunce as we con put on.

Naw, some time sin, Joe Marsh, as keeps

th' grocer's shop, a' top o'th' broo, just raund th' corner, findin as he'd moor fort do than coom asy for him an his wife, thowt it wouldn't be a bad thing fort hev some help in th' shop. Him an th' wife hed allus done aw as hed to be done befoor, an as they didn't do mich with th' quality, it wus only naw an agen as they hed any parsils as hed fort be took aat. An when this happent, they could nearly allus get a parsil took aat, by some lad as would come in for a penoth o' tracle, or some wench as wantit a hapenny candle. Theer's advantage in hevin a good monny poor folks' childer comin to a shop. Yo con get things took by em a greit distance, an things as is a greit weight, for a hapenny or a penny. But Joe Marsh wus gettin owder, an didn't like bein up o'th' run, fro th' time as he took th' shutters dawn in th' morning, to th' time as he put em up agen at neet. An he wus not only owder, but he wus a deal better off than he wus years sin, when he fust took that shop, an begun a sellin th' "Tea, Coffee, Tobacco, and Snuff," as wus on th' little boord as he'd nailt up o'er th' shop door. Yo'd a wondert hawever he could a made any profit aat o' what he sowd, if yo'd a stud in his shop for a day. Childer an wimmin would come in one after another, or t'gether, an they'd want a paund o' bread, or a hapoth or penoth o' tay, or a hapoth o' sugar, or a farthin candle, or a hapoth o' alliker, or a penoth o' coffee. Yo'ne heerd tell o' folk as lived

fro hand to maath—well, if yo'd ever spent any time in Joe Marsh's shop, yo'd see em by scores. It wusn't that thees folk only geet howd o' their money by odd pennys an tuppences through th' day, like a beggar mon or woman. It wus th' way as they'd gotten in, o' runnin to th' shop for evry meal. Just as mich sugar an tay, or it met be, coffee, an bread, as they wantit for a meal, they run to th' shop for, an geet it; then they run whomm with it, an as soon as it wus reddy they'd eight it up; an goo through th' same performunce when th' next meal time coom. I dar say, when Joe Marsh startit bisens, he'd a bin very glad fort a sowd paunds an hafe paunds, insted o' quater aances, an hafe aances, an aances. But th' naborhood wus poor, an he soon fond aat what sort of a trade could be done theer, an like a sensible mon, he accommodated hissels to it. Haw thoos Hatallyun Warehaasmen of big tawns, would a turnt up their noses at Joe Marsh an his customers! They wouldn't a thowt it possible for a mon to live aat of sich folk, let alone fort make money in sich a place. But if Joe Marsh's customers took a deal o' waitin on, they paid for it. He didn't stand theer tekkin pennys an tuppences, for three or four sorts o' things, baat knowin what he gen em for their money, an haw mich he hed aat on it to th' good. When th' sixteenth or th' thirty-second customer hed carrit off th' last of a paund of tay, Joe Marsh hed gotten twice as mich

aat on it as he would a done, if he'd hed a shop as richer folk delt at for their tay, by paunds at a time. An it was just th' same with evrythink else as he sowd. Th' money coom in slowly, an he'd a deal o' work o'er gettin howd on it; but it did come in, an caunted up weel at neet, an reckunt up weel at th' year's eend, when he coom fort tek aat o'th' bisens what money he fond he didn't want in it. Joe Marsh hed done weel, an hed sav't moor money than anybody knowd on, save th' turney as he geet fort put it aat to intrist for him. So he wusn't fort be blam't, when he fond hisselt gettin owder, an not as able, as he yust be, fort rossle with bags o' sugar, an boxes o' candles, an be at that work, an sarvin th' customers, aw th' day o'er.

It took a deal o' tawkin o'er with th' wife, both in th' day time an when th' shutters wus up, did this notion of hevin som'dy fort help em.

Joe would say,

"Tha sis, Sally, I think if we could only get a yung mon, as hed bin in a shop befoor, an as hed a good karacter, he could do aw th' heivin, an liftin, an pooing, as there is. An its that sort o' work as knocks me o'er naw. Standin beheend th' kaunter isn't anythink. But thoos bags an boxis, teks aw th' wind aat o' me, till I'm fit fort drop a top on em."

"That's weel put," Sally would say, "an monny a time I'm reet sorry for thee, but art sure ift geet a yung mon as hed bin



at th' bisens befoor, as he'd save thee fro sich work as that. As for as I con see abaat yung men in shops, they'd a deal sooner be standin beheend th' kaunter, showin their white risbunds under their kuat sleeves, an tekkin a look in th' glass fort see whether their hair's strait, or haw their mustash is comin on, than be rosslein aatside with boxes o' tay or candles, an bags o' sugar. Just as like as not, ift geet a yung mon as hed bin in a shop befoor, tha'd get one as would expect fort be th' gentleman, while tha did aw th' hard an nasty work. Worrust say to that?"

"Well," Joe would say, "I met get sich a one as that, but then I should find him aat, an we shouldn't be like't fort keep him tha knows. Besides, as soon as he coom here, I should just show him haw I've allus geet thoos boxes an bags in, an haw I've arrangt em in th' shop, an haw I've opent em an took th' stuff aat, an put it on th' shelves reddy for sellin. An after he'd larnt my ways, tha sis I should leev him to that sort o' work an goo beheend th' kaunter mysel."

"Didt ever hear," sed Sally, "that tale abaat Joe Panill an owd Lott?"

"N'ow," Joe sed, "I don't think as I ever heerd any tale abaat thoos two."

"Well then, I'll tell it thee. Joe Panill wus some sort of a wholesale mon as hed a bisens in Liverpool, an he coom fort live aat in th' country, at a haase with a garden to it. He'd heerd a deal abaat gardinin bein

sich healthy work, an haw nice it wus fort watch yer pratus, an yer collyflowers, an yer cabbitches, an sich things growin, an as they cost ye nòthink, if yo only did yer own delvin. So when he browt his things aat, he browt with em spades, an rakes, an everythink as they tow'd him at th' iron-monger's shop wus wantit abaat a garden. They perswaded him fort buy aw sorts o' things as would be yuseful in a garden, an a greit monny as he'd ne'er a fond yuse for. When he'd gotten his haase pretty streit, he begun a lookin raund that garden an wonderin haw fort begin on it. Hawever he knowd he should do reet if he started a delvin th' sile up. So he pood his kuat an weskut off, an geet one on his spades an made a start. He hedn't bin at it quarter of an hour, befoor his back felt like as if it wus breikin, an his shirt wus ringin weet with swet. An just as he wus tryin fort streiten hissels up for a bit of a rest, Owd Lott as lived in a haase near to, an as hed knowd him in Liverpool, lookt o'er th' wa', an cawd aat, 'Naw then, Panill, what are yo a doin off?' Panill, of coorse sed he'd begun a delvin his garden fort get it in order. 'Delvin!' sed Lott, 'an yo caw that delvin! Why yore nobbut losenin th' sile withaat buryin th' weeds an grass. Put on yer kuat an weskut for a while, an I'll come an show ye haw to do it.' Joe Panill did as he wus tow'd very willingly, an seet hissels dawn on a big flowerpot as wus theer, an took his fust lesson in gar-

denin. Owd Lott worked away with that spade, turnin th' sile o'er an buryin th' weeds, an th' grass, so as yo couldn't see theer'd bin any, wheer his spade hed bin. An he went on tellin Panill haw fort lay th' garden aat with pratus, an other things, aw th' time delvin away like a good un. Joe Panill quite lik't fort see him at it, an geet his pipe aat for a comfortable smook, an watch'd Owd Lott work away with that spade, with a deal moor pleshure then he'd hed when th' spade wus in his own hands. But that pipe wus to mich for Owd Lott. He lik't his smook above anythink. So when Panill hed just gotten weel into his smook, Lott sends th' spade into th' sile, an turns raund an ses, 'Naw, Joe, gimme that pipe an lemme see haw tha's larnt fort yuse th' spade.' But Panill sed as he hedn't yet larnt th' way Lott twisted that spade raund, so as fort bury th' weed th' way he did, an he begged Owd Lott fort goo on showin him. Lott thowt he'd done quite anough for one lesson; an as Panill wus quite of opinyun as he'd done anough delvin for one day, they went i'th' haase, an smookt t'gether, with some whisky an waater befoor em. Naw, what I should like t'ax thee is, 'Haw'll tha feel if th' yung mon, as tha tawks abaat, turns aat on the hands, like Joe Panill did with Owd Lott?' "

"Well," sed Joe Marsh, "I don't know. But I'm sure I shouldn't let him sit dawn on th' kaunter hevin a smook while I wus rosslein with th' boxis an th' bags. I

should send a chap o' that sort abaat his bisens."

"Naw then just listen to me," Sally would say, "Thee ger a handy lad abaat th' place, as tha con bring up in the own fashun. Theer's monny a big strappin lad as tha con get, as would heive an lift moor than thees yung hair-oilt chaps as hes bin beheend a kaunter befoor. Tha'll be able fort make a lad o' that sort just what t' wants him fort be, an when he's bin a year or two here tha'll hardly know as tha's anythink fort do."

It took a greit deal of tawkin o'er, befoor Joe Marsh made his mind up whether it should be a yung mon or a handy lad; but at last he gen in to his wife, an begun a lookin aat for a handy lad.

He fond it no asy job fort find one as lookt fort hev abaat him th' makins of a handy lad. Lads of aw sorts turnt up when it geet known as Joe Marsh wantit one, but nob'dy could honestly say of one in th' lot as he lookt likely fort turn aat fort be handy. An Sally hed never recommended any but a handylad. At last a nice spokken woman, as wus a widow, browt her lad, a strong-built urchin, abaat fourteen, as lookt like bein able t' make a stir amung bags an boxis when he geet a bit owder. He'd bin to schoo, an could write his name, an that wus what lots o' thoos as hed aplied couldn't do. An it ended with Joe Marsh ingagin him.

For some wicks th' lad did pratty weel,

becose th' moost o'th' time he wus doin nothink. But Joe hed tow'd him he must keep his eyes open when he wus doin nothink, an be larnin aw as he could. An when theer wus any boxis deliver't at th' shop he wus show'd haw fort get em on eend, an work em a bit at a time till he geet em into th' shop. An haw fort get thoos bags of sugar, an coffee, an sich like, on th' little truck fort wheel em. Joe wus gradely pertikkler abaat teichin him evry little thing, becose, as he sed, it wus woth while goin to some trubble at fust, becose when th' lad hed wonst larnt, he'd neer forget, an theer'd be no moor trubble with him. As for as his strength went, this lad seem't like anough fort prove a handy one. He couldn't get a box in, in th' time as Joe hissel could; but that wusn't fort be expected. Joe rub'd his hands with some satisfaction when he seed haw th' lad shap'd, an one day when th' lad wus agate amung th' boxis, he went into th' haase part, fort get his dinner, an he leet his wife know as he raly thowt they'd gotten a handy lad.

Unfortunately for Joe he hed left th' lad fort get in some moor boxis as hed bin deliver't near to th' shop door. An when he wus aat o'th' seet th' lad begun a thinkin as theer wus a asier way of gettin thoos big boxis in, than rosslein with em on eend, as his mester hed show'd him haw. He thowt he'd try, whether or not. He could only do it th' mester's way, if he fond aat as his wusn't th' best. So he geet one o'th'

big boxis on eend, an then he put a less box i'th' front on it, an leet th' big box drop on it. An then he pusht th' big box up on th' contrary eend to what it hed stood on befoor, an put th' little box in th' front on it agen, an did as he'd done befoor. Why he'd th' big box in th' shop in half th' time as it would a took fort a gotten it in, in th' way as his mester hed show'd him. Befoor Joe coom aat fro gettin his dinner th' handy lad, as he raly desarvt be cawd by this time, hed everythink in fro th' aatside, an wus straitenin up in th' shop. Joe couldn't help goin back to his wife, who wus washing up th' dishes at th' time, an tellin her haw th' lad hed gotten aw th' boxis into th' shop, while they'd bin hevin their dinner.

But Joe Marsh wusn't quite so comfortable in his mind after he'd happent fort notiss as some o' thoos little boxis, as hed bin browt in, wus terribly brokken an injurt at th' tops an sides. An th' effect on him wus woss when he fond aat th' state o'th' goods inside on em. They'd bin so squozen with th' big boxis fawin on em that theer wus mixtures in thoos little boxis as hed never bin heerd on in a grocer's shop befoor. Th' moost o'th' stuff in em wus spylt beyond recovry. Theer wus no doin anythink with pepper an marmylade, after they'd gotten weel mixt t'gether. An that wus only one o'th' kurius combynashuns as Joe fond in thoos little boxis. An some o'th' big uns wus in no better a state. He did a biggish trade in dip candles, an one o'th'

big boxis, as th' handy lad hed tipt o'er a little un, wus full o' candles. When it wus opent, theer wusn't a paund o' candles in it, as hedn't hafe on em brokken in one or two places. Sich a mess as this handy lad hed made, while his mester's back wus turnt, never wus heerd on befoor. Joe lookt fit fort a done anythink savage or aatrajus, while he wus openin thoos boxis, an findin aat haw mich damidge th' lad hed done. An I beleev, in my hart, he would a done somethink sarius, if he'd ever lookt at th' lad. But he kept his eyes off him, till he'd examint box after box, gooin wilder lookin as he went on.

At th' last he shaated aat, at th' very top of his vice,

"Sally!"

This browt his wife into th' shop in no time.

"Luth-the!" sed Joe, as soon as hoo wus in, "what gerrin a handy lad hes done for me!" An he howded his reet arm streit aat, an stood like a chap as hed bin struck stiff.

When Sally sid th' distrucshun as hed bin browt on th' stuff, woman like, hoo raist her brat to her eyes, an bost aat o' cryin.

"Worert standin theer for, cryin," roart Joe. "Goo into th' yard an fotch me that kluas line, for as sure as I'm livin, I'll hang this handy lad o' thine by th' neck, o'er th' shop front!" An he turnt raund an made a grab at that lad. But aw as he fastent

hissel to wus th' lad's cap. Th' rest of th' kluas, an th' lad as wus in em, wus raund that corner, an dawn th' broo, like winkin.

An that wus th' last as wus sin of th' handy lad by anybody. Haw for he run, or haw lung he run, nob'dy knowd. But he never went near Joe Marsh's shop agen, nor he never went whomm to his mother nather. But abaat a year after, his mother geet a letter fro him, as hed bin posted somewheer ather in Indy or Chinay, as tow'd haw he'd run away, becose Joe Marsh wus gooin t'hang him by th' neck, o'er th' shop front, an as he'd gotten on a ship as took him to forrin parts, an as he should come back no moor, not till he could hear as Joe Marsh an his wife, wus both on em deead, an comfortable in their graves.





## AAR NEW NABURS.

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I'm quite willin fort allow as a nabur should be naburly, an not meddle an mix with his naburs' affairs. He shouldn't be to reddy fort complain if any little thing gus wrung. Nor he shouldn't be to reddy fort tawk abaat things as he sis an hears his naburs do. Theer's a monny little sakrits like, as naburs hes between theirsels, as should be kept to theirsels, an not be blabbed aat to evrybody. Aw this I'm quite willin fort allow, an give in to, an act up to. But then, theer's naburs as is theirsels so unnaburly, so aggryvatin an provokin, sich regular torments fro wick's eend to wick's eend, that some road or another, yo're lik't fort satisfy yoresel by findin fawt, an lettin aat.

I'm in this fix just naw. Above a month sin, Bill Lorrison an his family coom fort live in th' next haase to us. His back door an aar's opens into th' same yard, an th' back doors is close t'gether. Naw, of aw th' folk as hes lived at this next haase, sin we'n bin livin here, thees Lorrisons is th' cobst. Th' naises as gus on amung em fro morning to neet, would aggryvate a Mormon saint, as wus yust to whole haases full o' ives an childer. Bill 'll be rorein at th' fe; th' wife 'll be yellin at th' childer;

an thees 'll be skrikin one amung another. Th' row begins afoor brekfust, an its not o'er at bed time. Theer's moor naise allus when Bill's a whomm, not as I think he likes it, but, being put aat with th' wife's yellin, an th' childer's skrikin, he jines in like a base singer at a konsert.

Naw, sich naburs as thees, is rather to lively for a mon of quiet ways, like me. But I don't see haw I'm fort get relief. If I wus fort goo an knock at th' door, an tell em as they wus a newsunce to th' naborhood, for th' rows they kickt up, haw do I know but that would be th' start of a bigger row than theer's ever bin yet? An I met be mixt up in it too; which would be a deal woss than hevin to listen to a row, through a brick wa. I couldn't see my way to anythink o' that sort, so I just thowt to mysel, "Th' best thing as I con do is fort sit mysel dawn at that raund table, an yase my mind, by lettin folk know, next Setterday, what sort o' naburs we'n getten, an under what difficulties thees Sketches o' mine hes fort be ritten. It'll maybe do thees Lorrisons moor good than blowin em up." So I followt up th' notion at wonse. But several times awreddy, sin I startit, th' row's bin so greit, I've thowt of hevin a rowler towil raund my head, fort keep th' naise aat.

But fort goo on abaat aar new naburs. It's my opinyun as its th' wife as is at th' bottom of aw th' rows as gus on amung

W

thees Lorrison. Bill's generally considert quiet enough when he's at his work, or in th' street. He's a stonemason by trade, an though he teks a drop naw an agen, his mester an his naburs 'll caw him a sober stedly mon.

But his wife appeers fort a come into th' world with speshal powers for kickin up a row. Theer wus th' start as hoo made this mornin. One o'th' yungsters, unknown to her, hed browt th' iron kettle into th' yard, fort fill it with waater, fort bile for their brekfusts. Hoo coom to th' kitchen door, an seein th' lad bringin th' kettle up th' yard, yelled aat,

"Put that kettle dawn, wilsto. That'll be brokken th' next!"

I wus raather sorry fort see haw soon her words coom true.

Th' lad gen a bit of a start when he heerd her, an catched th' toe of his clog agen a stone, an that kettle went aat on his hands like a shot; an yo could hear fro th' naise as it made, when it reiched th' graund, as th' last bilin waater as ever would come aat on it, hed coom aat th' day befoor.

But that poor lad wus very near in as damidg'd a state as th' kettle befoor he geet aat on his mother's clutches. Th' way her tung went, an her arms went, couldn't a bin b'yetten, baat it hed bin by a woman as wus seet in motion by a steam ingun. I'd hard work fort keep fro interfeerin. But if I hed done so, while her temper wus up like that, I hevn't any daut, I should a carrit th'

marks o' my interfeerin for a good while fort come.

As hoo couldn't bile any waater in th' crack't kettle, he browt th' prato pon into th' yard, fort scrape th' sides on it, befoor puttin some waater in that, fort bile for their brekfusts. Th' naise as hoo made with th' iron spoon while hoo wus scrapin th' pon, wus nowt to th' naise of her tung, as went aw th' time, abaat a hunderd an twenty to th' minnit.

I'm sure, an I may say as I know, as their owdist wench, as is abaat eight, is as naice a lookin wench as theer is in any haase abaat, if hoo wus only cleunt, an hed her hair combt, an put t'gether gradely, an hed dacent frocks on. As it is, th' chilt's lost in nast, an rags, an neglect, till hoo seems fort hev a waary, tiert look, abaat thoos black eyes of hers, as makes me think as hoos one as th' good angels 'll tek befoor her time, aat o' pity for th' hard lot as seems fort lie befoor her.

My owd woman wus washin her hands in th' yard one afternoon when th' chilt crope up to her so quiet like, as made her shaat aat,

"Bless me, chilt, haw't freetent me."

"I didn't want to, Mrs. Bratsha" sed th' chilt.

They cawn her Mary.

Lookin dawn at th' nast on th' chilt's face, an th' hair hangin o'er th' face as though it wus doin its best fort cover th' nast, an th' rags as th' chilt wus covert

with, th' owd woman felt sorry for her, an sed.

"Is the mother in, Mary."

Hoo didn't need fort a axt that. Th' place wus to quiet for Mary's mother t'a bin a whomm.

"N'ow," sed Mary. "Hoo's gone aat an wain't be back till tay time."

"Dost think as hoo'd be vext if I wus fort wash the face, an the hands, an the neck, for they wantin washin above a bit?"

"I think hoo would" sed Mary "becose hoo ses nather soap nur waater 'll make us childer cleun. So I'm feart hoo'd goo on abaat it."

"Well, but Mary, would t'like fort be washt an made dacent befoor the mother comes whomm, becose ift would I'll see what soap and water will do for thee."

"I think I should like it" sed th' chilt, "but I'm feart hoo'll use me for it when hoo comes whomm."

However it eended up with th' owd woman bringin this chilt into th' haase, an givin her what th' owd woman cawd a "reglar good scrubbin." Hoo washt th' chilt's arms, face, head, neck, an hafe her body; an befoor hoo gen up, hoo seet th' chilt on a stoo' an washt her feet an legs. Then hoo fotcht a sma' tooth comb and yust that to her hair. An when that wus done, hoo teed th' hair up with some bits o' brade, an theer wus nowt abaat th' chilt as lookt like th' same, except th' owd rags as hed fort be put on her agen.

When th' owd woman lookt at her an sid what a change hoo'd made, hoo lifted th' chilt up in her arms, an kist her, an sed,

"Bless thee, Mary, wench, theer wus a little anjil, covert o'er an hid by that nast."

"What did ye do that for?" sed Mary.

"What did I wash thee for? Why to find aat what sort of a wench wus under th' nast, to be sure."

"No not that," sed Mary, "what did ye put yer face to mine for?"

"What did I kiss thee for?"

"Is it cawd kissin, fort put yer faces t'gether?" axed Mary.

"To be sure it is!" sed th' owd woman, "hesn't bin kist befoor?"

"Nob'dy" sed th' chilt, in a sorrowful way, "never did it afoor."

Naw my owd woman, as for as good looks gus, hes sin her best days, as yo'll reddyly imadgin. But I never seed a expresshun o' that face, as I wus moor took with, than that as coom on it then. Yo could see evry part of her face workin up in puckers, just th' same as if theer'd bin a galvanick batray at work on her. Her eyes filled with waater, an hoo reglarly bost aat in a sort of wailin cry, as hoo hugged that chilt to her breast, an sed,

"God bless thee, chilt! Eight year old, an ne'er bin kist, by nather mother nor faather!"

When Lorrison's wife coom back, hoo gen a reglar start when hoo sid Mary in th' state as my wife hed fixt her up in.

"What's coom o'er thee, chilt?" Hoo shaated. "Wheer hes't bin?"

"Mrs.—Bratsha's—bin—washin—me," sed th' chilt, tremblin aw o'er, feart lest her mother'd get howd on her an shake her aat on her cluas.

"Mrs. Bratsha's bin washin thee? hes hoo?" we could hear her shaat at th' top of her vice. "Hesn't hoo enough fort do fort wash up her own nast, baat gerrin owd o' my childer an tubbin em? Lerer mind her own bisens, or it'll be wos for her."

This, an a deel moor sich tawk, went on aw neet till Bill coom whomm! Evry naw an agen her temper geet up so as hoo wus lik't fort stand i'th' back doorway, fort give moor maath to what hoo hed fort say.

For abaat an hour after Bill geet in, theer wus th' biggest row gooin on amung em, as we ever heerd. It wus anough fort drive quiet folk wild. We could hardly hear one another speik. Hawever, at th' lung length it eended up like one o' thoos brass band konserts, with a terable crashin row. Th' childer seemt fort be sent scutterin up stairs t'bed, skrikin their very hardist. An when they appeart fort be gotten aat of hearin, theer wus a flunder an yell at th' back door, as wus kaust by Bill pitchin his wife aat, neck an crop, an thretnin fort smash her skull in, if hoo coom near th' door agen, befoor hoo could keep her tung still in her maath.

It appeart like as if Bill could be th' mester when he tried, for his wife stopt her

yellin, an seet dawn on a owd bucket, an chang't it into a cry, which Bill leet her keep to for above an hour, befoor he coom to th' door an cawd aat, "Art comin in th' haase? or art gooin t'stop theer aw neet?"

So that day's row wus at an eend. But one day's so like another, an they're aw so very unlike what we yust fort hev with dacent naburs, that ather we mon flit fro th' owd graund, or summat mon be done fort get rid o' thees Lorrisons. I hed thowt of borrowing a blacksmith's anvil, an hevin it fixt up in th' yard, an gooin at that with a big hommer evrytime their rows wus on. But when I nam't it to th' owd woman, hoo nockt it o'th' head at wonse, by axin me, haw mich money I should a made by Setter-day neet, by peilin away for fourteen hours a day, on a blacksmith's anvil. An, as hoo sed, that wus abaat a averidge of th' number of hours aat of every twenty-four as they took for their rowin.

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Sin I wrote what's befoor this, theers bin another row at Lorrisons, but I'm happy fort think as its likely fort be th' last as they'll hev fort trubble us. *They'n hed th' baylies for a shop score.* A lot o' their furnicher wus walkt off, an what wus left em, they'n took away theirsels somewheer, an naw th' haase is lockt up an emty, an waitin for another tenant. But I'd sooner pay th' rent for it, an keep it emty, than hev another lot o' Lorrisons livin th' next door to me.



## ABAAT JIM DIKKYSON.

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Unless yo'n notissed things o' that sort, an seet em dawn in yer memry, yo waint hev any notion haw yasy it is for a chap fort start a lot o' nowty tales a gooin abaat anybody as he wants fort bring into trubble. He con do it yasy enough, baat gerrin hissel into any lumber, if he's practist it lung enough. Theer's a chap as yo'll aw know, I'm not gooin t'be within lerrin his name aat, Jim Dikkyson's his name, an he's bin, aw his life, a dab hand at startin a lot o' nowty tales abaat folk as he's hed no fancy for. He could set hafe o'th' tungs in th' tawn a waggin abaat a mon or a woman, baat sayin a word hissels at th' start, as th' sharpist turney could tek him up for.

He's a little bit of a nasty rootin place, as he caws his shop, wheer he keeps aw sorts o' things as yo couldn't get anywheer else, an wheer he's gotten rags, an ropes, on sich things, fro folk as hes gotten howd on em, one road or another, up an dawn th' country. When he isn't doin anythink in th' shop, he's a trick o' standin a yard or so on th' kosay, in th' front of his shop door, an stoppin evrybody as gus past, ather fort hear their news or fort tell em his. An baat folk crost o'er to th' tother side o'th' street, when they sin him aatside,

it's no yasy matter fort pass Jim Dikkyson, baat hearin what he hes fort say, an sayin summat to him. Fro wheer he moostly stands, folk hes fort turn a one side, ather to th' reet hand or th' lift, fort pass him, an while they're tryin fort do that, he's like as if he hooks hissels to em whether they will or not. It makes other folk grin agen, fort see haw Jim sticks to a chap, an howds on to him, till he's ather towed him aw as he wants fort tell him, or gotten awaat on him as he wants fort know. When a chap is in a horry, he'd sooner goo any raund abaas road, than run th' chance o' bein poo'd up by Jim Dikkyson, an fastent on to that kosay.

Th' worst feelin as comes o'er a mon when Jim Dikkyson's tawkin to him, an tellin him some nowty tales, as he ses he's heerd abaas somb'dy else, is when he thinks as if he ever does anythink as vexes Dikkyson, somb'dy 'll be sure fort tell Dikkyson a lot of ugly tales abaas him; or Dikkyson 'll start em, which is very near th' same thing. Theer's chaps as hes stood o' that kosay, heerin Dikkyson's tales by th' hour t'gether, as would a knockt him dawn if he'd toucht em, if they hedn't a bin so freetent of his tung, an his way o' settin slander a gooin abaas folk. It wus like as if they wus foorst to, whether they would or not, fort show respect an pashunce towart a mon as they'd a jump't for joy fort hear as he'd hed his tung cut aat on his maath. If it hedn't a bin for his tung, theer'd hardly a bin a chilt

in th' tawn as wouldn't a bin bowd anough fort a gone to Jim Dikkyson's door an a slakt its tung aat at him, or a kept at him. As it wus, an as they thowt, owin to that tung of his, evry mon, woman, an chilt, wus as freetent of doin or sayin anythink as would vex Jim Dikkyson, as they would a bin if he'd bin able t'a sent em to th' kaunty jale fort be lockt up an whipt. Naw as a skandlemonger, Jim Dikkyson, play'd his game like a kawshus chap, as knowd what it wus fort work mischeef, an fort keep aat on it at th' same time. Till other folk hed begun o' fixin some pertikkler nowty act on a mon, or woman, yo'd never hear on it fro Jim Dikkyson. Till that time coom, he'd only goo on what a litterrary friend o' mine caws, "generallytis," if yo'n any notion o' what thoos is.

He'd be standin on th' kosay, an to th' fost chap as would come up he'd say,

"Hest heerd what's gooin naw abaat Tom Mullis?"

"Tom Mullis!" th' chap would shaat, "I've heerd nowt abaat him."

"Tha hesn't! then say nowt. They're tawkin abaat nob'dy else."

"Well," th' chap would say, "wor abaat him? What's he bin doin?"

"Ne'er mind! ne'er mind!" Jim would say, "tha'll hear soon anough."

An then he'd let that chap goo, feelin quite sure as he'd pass it on as theer wus summat abaat Tom Mullis as folk hed gotten howd on.

Another chap would come up and he'd say,

"Hes tha heerd owt abaas Tom Mullis?"

"Tom Mullis! n'ow I've heerd nob'dy speikin abaas him."

"Tha dusn't say so. Why that chap as hes just gone befoor thee, wus tawkin to me abaas it. But ift doesn't know, tha'll hear nowt fro me. I mon keep aat o' scrapes."

Befoor th' day wus o'er, Jim Dikkyson would a tackelt a duzzon or a score o' folk in th' same way. An as may be imagint, as neet coom on, Tom Mullis's gooins on would be in a hunderd maaths, an very near as monny different tales would be towed abaas him.

It mon be remembert as Jim Dikkyson never sed as Tom Mullis, or anybody else as he tawkt abaas, hed done any one pertikkler thing as wus nowt. "Folk wus tawkin abaas em," or "Theer wus quare things bein turnt o'er abaas em," and sich like things he'd say, but never anythink as they could fasten him to. He wus like that Yanky clockmaker, an knowd a good deal abaas "human natur." When he'd startit th' baw, by sayin as anybody wus bein tawkt abaas, he knowd weel anough, his baw, like a snobaw, would gether as it rowlt.

It wus summat like this with folk as he seet a tawkin. Two chaps would meet, an one on em would say,

"They're tawkin abaas Tom Mullis, I hear?"

"Abaat Tom Mullis! are they? Well, I'm not surprist!"

"Artent?"

"N'ow! I shouldn't a bin surprist if they'd begun afoor."

"Well, he's bin a quare un in his time, for a quiet chap as he looks."

"A quare un, I should think he wus! But theer's monny a quare chap as howds his head up square till he's fond aat. An tha may depend Tom Mullis hes bin fond aat naw."

"I wonder wor it is. Dost think he'll a bin gooin with another woman?"

"By th' hart! I shouldn't be a bit surprist if that's it!" An then after a minit's thowt, "That'll be it, tha maybe sure. He wus allus gooin with hafe a duzzen yung wimmen, when he wus a yung mon."

"Whatever'll his wife do abaat it, dost think?"

"I don't know. I'm rale sorry for her, becose hoo's a dacent sort, an's allus seemt as praud as a woman could be, fort hev Tom Mullis for a husbant. It's a greit comin dawn for her."

"Whoeyever dost think it'll be as he's gooin with. Theer's not a woman in th' tawn as doesn't know as he's marrit."

"Not a single one; but wor o' that? Theer's allus a woman as'll goo wrung, when theer's a mon as wants her."

"Well, I'm sorry as Tom Mullis hes gone wrung, an I'm sorry for his wife, an I'm sorry for th' woman as he's took up

with. Its a bad job for aw on em, an theer 'll be no eend o' trubble comin aat on it, tha'll see."

"That theer will. But we mon find aat whoey it is as he's took up with."

When thees two hed gotten that for, they'd separate, an they'd start with two moor wheer they'd left off t'gether. So yo con hev a good like aim haw Tom Mullis would be tawkt abaat in four-an-twenty hour after Jim Dikkyson axt th' queshtun,

"Hest heerd what's gooin naw abaat Tom Mullis?"

Tom Mullis's name would be in evry maath, an evrythink as wus nowt an skandulous would be sed abaat him.

Aw sorts o' mischeef wus workt in this way. Chaps lost their places through what their mesters heerd abaat em. Husbants went whomm an very near kilt their wives, through beleevin th' skandle as they'd heerd abaat em. An wives went rompin mad, an seet at their husbands with th' ten commandments, befoor th' poor beggars knowd wheer they wus, or what they'd bin doin wrung. Theer wus familis as hed never disagreed no moor than a row o' peighsticks, as hed bin seet agen one another like Turks an Rooshuns. An aw thees things hed gone on through Jim Dikkyson startin th' baw a rowlin, an evrybody else shuvvin it alung as soon as they seed it, an runnin after it as soon as they heerd on it.

Haw monny year Dikkyson hed bin

carryin on like this I don't know. But I should think ever sin he hed that shop, an that's bin a lung time. But at th' last he's hed th' tables turnt on hissel, in a way as hes welly made a loonatic on him.

In a haase, not for fro wheer Jim Dikkyson hes his shop, theer lives a chap, as is moor notid for keepin his maath shut, than for yusin his tung. When he's bin by hissel, he'd often laft, fort think what a lot they wus in th' tawn, fort be play'd on in that fashun, by a chap like Dikkyson.

"Why, the hangment," he'd think to hissel, "caunt they tek no notiss o' what Dikkyson says, insted o' addin to it, an makin it moor an moor by their own nowty invenshuns. Dikkyson'd be to freetent fort tell any lies abaat anybody streit aat, but he doesn't need fort do, so lung as he's only fort show haw he wants other folk fort invent lies an fort set em a gooin. Bur I'll see whether I caunt set their tungs a gooin abaat Dikkyson, an see haw he likes em waggin abaat him."

That very day he made a start. Meetin a chap as he knowd fort be a good hand at makin skandle fly, he sed in a very sollum an sakrit sort of a way,

"Hest heerd anythink abaat Jim Dikkyson?"

Th' chap wus fairly staggert! It seemt to him, as if theer wus anybody as dast say anythink at aw abaat Jim Dikkyson, then theer must be summat woss abaat Dikkyson, than hed ever bin heerd on abaat anybody

else befoor. When he geet his breth, he sed,

“N’ow! what’en they gotten aat abaat him?”

“Hesn’t heerd?” sed th’ quiet chap, with a vice as met a belung’t to a navvy, an with as mich surprise as he could crom into his face.

“Heerd! N’ow! What is it?”

“Ift hesn’t heerd, tha will hear. But I’d raather not be th’ fost to tell thee.”

He sed abaat as mich to two moor fellows as he coom across, an then he went whomm, an wus as quiet as ever, thinkin as he’d put quite enough burm into that doff, fort make it rise any heit.

An if ever theer wus a mon as hed reckont up reet befoorhand, it wus that quiet chap as could keep his maath shut, an his tung still.

Befoor th’ wick wus o’er, Jim Dikkyson hed bin fond aat gradely, so evrybody sed. They hed it, as him an his haasekeeper wus no better than they should be t’gether; as theer wus a yung woman, as liv’d near to him, as wouldn’t hev fort pass his door, fort find her chilt’s faather; as he’d gotten his place cromful o’ ropes, an lead, an brass, an aw sorts o’ stuff, as he’d gotten howd on for next to nothink, becose he knowd weel enough as they’d bin stown; as he’d weights in his shop as wus to monny aances to th’ paund fort buy with, an some as wus aances short fort sell with; as aw th’ bad money as ever coom into th’ tawn, hed bin browt



in by Jim Dikkyson, an past on to folk by him.

But, I couldn't pretend fort tek up yer time, by gooin o'er hafe o'th' things as wus aat abaat him. Folk wus very freetent at fost of sayin anythink agen him, but when their tungs seemt fort a broke lose, theer wus no stoppin on em. Nowt wus to bad for em to put dawn to him, or fort beleev on him.

Dikkyson wus some days befoor he'd any notion of what wus gooin on abaat him; but he wusn't lung in findin aat as theer wus summat strange abaat th' folk as past him on th' kosay. Evrybody seemt in to big a horry fort stop hafe a minit fort hear what he hed fort say. Lots on em lookt as if they'd like fort punch him; an like as if they would do too, if he didn't ler em goo on abaat their bisens. He couldn't tell what fort make on it; folk yusent fort be athatens with him.

One o'th' days, hawever, he fastent on a chap as wus tryin fort get raund him baat speikin, with,

"Here, Tom, dusent want fort hear th' news?"

"I don't want fort hear no moor news abaat thee, Dikkyson, till they'n gotten summat better fort say abaat thee," an then he wus for gooin on.

But Dikkyson cawd aat,

"Here, I say, Tom, howd on. 'News abaat me!' Dost meeun fort say as folk's tawkin abaat me? Worrer they sayin?"

"Tha'd not thank me for tellin thee."

"Yah, but I should. Worrer they sayin."

"Well," ses Tom, "don't thee get vext with me for tellin thee. They're sayin as thar no better than tha owt t'be, but a darned seet woss. They sen as tha's bin fond aat fort be a reglar owd rip, a chetter, an a chap as 'll ger howd o' money any road, reet or wrung, but moostly wrung. An they sen as th' rason why tha's allus bin so reddy fort start tales abaat other folk, he bin fort keep em fro tawkin abaat thee."

Aw th' colour went aat o' Jim Dikkyson's face while he listent to what this chap sed, an he hed fort wind hissels up befoor he could ax th' queshtun,

"Dost say as they're sayin sich things as thoos abaat me?"

"Sich things as thoos!' Why naw, look here," ses th' chap, "I dasent tell thee hafe they're sayin abaat thee. If I did, tha'd ather goo an hang thesel, or tha'd knock somb'dy's neck aat, an be hung a bit further on for murder. Of aw th' tales as tha's stood on this kosay an tow'd abaat other folk theer's bin none on em woss, I don't think any on em's bin as bad, as thoos as is naw gooin abaat thee. Luth-the, ift doesn't keep to the shop, an stand off th' kosay, an give o'er stoppin folk as they walken past, tha'll be drove aat o'th' tawn quick, an aw as belongs to thee made a bunfire on. So think o' that."

"An wor hev I ever done fort set folk's tungs a gooin abaat me?"

"Ne'er mind axin me, I've tow'd thee enough. Moor than I thowt o' tellin thee when I begun. Thee ax th' next chap as comes along, an if I've tow'd thee a word of a lie, of what folks are sayin abaat thee, why, blow me ; that's aw."

An th' chap went on, an left Jim Dikkyson fort think o'er what he'd heerd. An Dikkyson went into his shop with his maath dawn, an his sperits nearer to th' graund than his maath wus. Th' moor he thowt o'er what he hed bin tow'd, th' woss mad it made him. Nowt in th' shop wus like th' same to him. Befoortime, when he yust fort turn back agen into that shop, after startin folks' tungs agoo in abaat somb'dy or another, he yust fort chuckle to hissels, an laff reet aat, an appeer fort be th' jollyist chap in th' tawn. But naw as they'd getten thees tales aat abaat him, he nather chuckelt nor laft, but stud theer with his hands in his pockets, lookin like a stone monnymment o' misry.

After he'd stopt in th' shop as lung as his state would let him, he turnt aat agen on th' kosay, determint fort hev summat fort say to th' fost mon as coom along. He hedn't lung fort wait befoor a chap as hed often carrit his skandle abaat th' tawn coom up, an Jim Dikkyson startit on him like this:—

"Hest heerd anybody in th' tawn sayin anythink abaat me?"

"Yah ; I've heerd summat o' what they're sayin," sed this chap.

“Worrer they sayin? Whoey startit it? I’ll make somb’dy smart for this,” sed Jim, gooin red an white by turns, an stampin his feet dawn on th’ kosay. “Whaten they towd thee? An whoey towd thee? Let’s be knowin aw abaas it; for I’ll fire into somb’dy befoor lung.”

“Tha wait fire into anybody through what I’s tell thee. Tha mon find it aat some other road. Beside, ift puts thesel aat abaas it like that, tha’ll ger a crawd raund th’ place in no time, an summat ’ll happen thee befoort gets in th’ shop agen. Tha’s gotten evrybody’s dander up with the gooins on. If I’s thee, I’d goo in th’ haase, an ne’er come aat agen, till I wus browt aat feet fost.”

An with that this chap left him.

He tried two or three moor as went past, but they wus aw dawn on him like a looud o’ bricks. So then, bilin o’er with rage, he geet his kuat an hat, an went of to a turney, fort set him to work. Th’ turney wus willin anough fort sarve a writ on evry mon, woman, an chilt, in th’ tawn, if he could only get howd of summat agen em. But he could make nowt of Jim Dikkyson’s ravins. So he towd him fort goo whomm agen, an find aat whoey it wus as hed skandleist him, and what they’d sed, an come agen with th’ folk as he’d geet th’ infurmashun aat on, an then he’d ler em see what it would cost fort spred lies an skandle abaas a dacent chap like Jim Dikkyson.

But Jim Dikkyson hed fort submit to th’

skandle, baat gettin any satisfakshun, becose nob'dy would tell him owt as he could fasten on. Evrybody as he spoke to wus willin anough fort own as theer wus a deel o' quare things sed abaat him. Some would say theer met be a deel o' lies turnt o'er; but they wus quite sure theer must be monny true things amung em; and th' best thing he could do, would be fort be quiet an try fort mend his ways, an maybe in time folk would forget what they wus tawkin abaat then, an he'd be able fort howd up his head agen.

Whether he'll ever get o'er it or not, I don't know. But just naw, Jim Dikkyson's in a bad way, and theer's hardly one chap in th' tawn as'll speik to him, or say a good word for him.

That quiet chap, as keeps his maath shut, an his tung still, did th' trick very clivverly.



## POLLY STOCKLEY'S VALENTINE.

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I shouldn't be surprist if there are folk as beleev, though they'll not aw on em say it streit aat, as good looks and good lives, good forms an good morals, nearly aw belong to th' rich; while th' poor hev getten Benjymon's share of ugly mugs, aat-o'-shape limbs, an natsheral nowtiness. If yo'll read one o' thoos novels aat o'th' Libray, or what'll be just as good, ger a lot of *Family Heralds*, an read' em, yo'll find as folks as lives blameless lives, sets good examples to evrybody, an does good aw raund em, is, if not allus, nearly allus, folk as is weel off, an never knowd what it wus fort want tuppence, an not know wheer fort find it. If yo read abaat a yung woman, as hes a face as a painter would goo wild fort get in his picter; or a figger as a skulpter would want fort bring aat in marble; or a kind good soul in her as must make th' "ministerin sperits" monny a time bost aat a singing "Halleluyah;" are ye ever towed as her faather gets his livin as a jurneymon weelreet, or as her mother teks in washin, or as hoo, hersel, hes bin aat at sarvice sin hoo wus fourteen?

Are yo heck, as like! Befoor th' fellows as writes thees stories ses anythink abaat their good yung wimmen—befoor they give

ye th' leest notion of what they're like, ather in body or mind, yo hev fort read abaat th' gorjus manshun, as is in a very anshent park, wheer oaks, an elms, an other noble trees hev sheltered that mayden's ancesters for hunderds of years befoor that story opens aat. Moostly yo'll hev discripshuns of beautiful carridge drives through avynews of widely branchin trees, befoor they'll even lay yo dawn at th' door of th' gorjus manshun. An when yo're theer, yo'll not be let goo in till its bin pinted aat as th' owdest part o'th' bildin is Norman, another part Tewder, another part Elizzybeetum, an so on. An even when th' front door is opent at last, an yo're leet in, it'll tek a lung time befoor yo get to that perfect specimen of yung wimmen, as yo wanten fort get at; becose there'll be picters, an statyews, an furnicher, an tappistray, an things as I don't know th' names on, for ye to look at an examine, befoor yo'll be gradely prepart fort make yer new ackwaintance. An when at th' last yore let into th' room as hoo's in, yo'll find both hersel an evrythink else laid aat to th' best advantidge. Moost likely hoo's reclinin on a sofa, "rapt in thowt." A book she's bin readin, hes slipt aat of her hands, an dropt on that velvet carpit. Th' goolden sunleet comes through th' west window, an plays at hide an seek amung her glossy ringlets, which lie in rich profushun on the pillow, that supports her fair yung head.

But theer's no need for me fort goo on any moor like this. It's just the kind of way as aw thees bookmakers gus on. Their bewtyful an virtywus yung wimmen are allus livin in gorjus manshuns; an drest in silks, an satins, an laces; an they're ather bathed in glorious sunleet, or th' pale beems of th' moon adds to their hevenly or ithearyal bewty. I reckon that it mon be that aw th' fellows as sits dawn fort write thees stories, mon be o' one mind; that a yung woman as hes a pretty face, a good figger, an nice ways with her, owt to hev lots o' money, live in a gorjus manshun, an hev plenty o' sunshine as hoo passes through life, whether hoo hes or not. Well, I'm not th' mon to say anythink agen a notion o' that sort. Good folk an good things, will allus match weel t'gether. But they're not as often pair't as yo'll think they are, if yore opinyun hes bin form't by readin novels an stories.

Naw, if I wus fort want, ever so bad, fort let ye know what gus on in greit men's haases, an in rich men's haases, I couldn't do owt o'th' sort. I dar say th' poor folk as would read what I should put dawn, inetn't find aat as I knowd nowt abaat what I wus pretendin fort know aw abaat. But then th' greit men, an th' rich men, wouldn't hev fort read twenty lines, fort find aat as I wus a reglar humbug, an knowd nowt abaat what I wus writin on. Naw, a chap con get a bad name, baat makin any



speshal effort of his own for it, so I'st be like th' cobbler, I'st stick to my last; that is, I'st write abaat folk an things as I've bin browt up with, an raly know somethink abaat.

It's not likely as aw on ye 'll know Polly Stockley, though theer's no daubt some will. But for th' informashun of evrybody, let me say hoo doesn't live in a manshun. If I was tekkin ye at neet to see th' haase as hoo lives in, yo'd hev fort be very pertikkler as yo followt me up that bottle-neckt passidge as gus aat o'th' main street, becose one minit yo met catch yer foot agen a stone an goo dawn, an th' next goo with one leg in a hole, with a foot or so of slutch an waater in it. But when yo'd getten through th' narrow passidge, yo'd find yer-sel in a coort or yard, as hed six or eight cottidges in it. Moost likely yo'd find th' door open of th' one as Polly lives at. Reet opposite th' door yo'd see a mangle, an bein neet, very likely there'd be a candle burnin a top o'th' mantle piece, an Polly would be turnin that mangle, while th' owd woman, her mother, would be changin things, as was bein put under, an took fro under th' mangle.

Th' fact is, as nather Polly Stockley, nor her mother, hes a blessed hapenny comin in to em, but what they getten between em by washin, an irenin, an manglin. Abaat eighteen year sin, when Polly was under two year owd, her faather was browt whomm fro th' coal pit with his back broke, an th'

life went aat on him just as they'd gotten him whomm. Folk as wus sorry for th' poor widow, clubb'd their money t'gether, an bowt her th' mangle, as hoo's hed ever sin. An folk as could afford fort put their washin aat, sent it to her. An so with hard work—an it wus hard work befoor Polly wus owd anough fort help her—hoo'd manidged fort powler on.

Naw, if anybody wus fort say as it's possible for a wench as hes fort get her livin by washin, an irenin, an manglin, fort be as cromful of pride an consate, as a egg's full of meit; I shouldn't deny it, becose it may be so. But if ever theer wus a wench as met a bin praud of her face, an make, an figger, with good graund for it, that wench would a bin Polly Stockley. Her forehead, an cheeks, an nose, an chin, is as reglar, an smooth, an as finely shap't, as th' clivverist skulpter could cut aat o' white marble. An then thoos rosy lips met a bin pickt aat of a millyun, fort set off a face, as, fort look at, wus very near fort worship. When yo fost look at her face, yo think it wants just th' leest bit of colour in th' world fort set it off. But just ger into tawkin with her, an watch that face, an yo'll see th' colour playin o'er that face like sunshine o'er a meadow, when theer's fleesy clauds evry naw an agen passin befoor th' sun.

But, if yo'd like fort see Polly Stockley to perfekshun—or what's th' same thing, if yo'd like fort see th' perfekshun of a yung

woman in form, figger, mould, an bild, yo mon be on th' look aat for her when hoo teks a baskit of clean kluas whomm on her head! Don't look at th' baskit! look at th' figure under it! an tell me what's th' reet word fort discribe it. Did ye ever see anythink befoor so mich a thing of bewty as that? I don't meen just bewty of face, becose yo'll be apt fort o'erlook th' face aw t'gether, when a figger like that gus past ye. If ever that theer Veenus, as th' anshunts hes leet us hear on, as th' goddess of bewty, th' mother of love, an th' mistriss of grasis an pleshure, could b'yet Polly Stockley in face, an figger, an grase, an moshun, then I don't wonder at her settin th' place as thoos gods and goddesses liv'd in, in a commoshun, an hevin aw th' gods runnin after her, an aw th' goddesses jellus on her. But unless that theer Veenus hed bin yust, fro a chilt, to carryin baskits of kluas, or cans of waater, or summat aqual to em, on her head, her figger never could a bin browt aat to th' perfekshun as Polly Stockley's hes bin. If rich folk only knowd haw carryin weights on th' head, brings aat graseful figgers, an devellops bewty of form, its my opinyun as th' washer-wimmin o'th' country would make a deel moor money by tekkin yung lady pewpils fort carry th' kluas whomm, than they'n ever made aat o'th' washin.

I needn't tell ye as Polly Stockley's no dowdy. Yo'll never see her gooin abaat th' haase in a pair of owd trashes, with

holes in her stockings, an hair as hesn't felt a comb, an a face as hesn't hed any soap an waater sin th' day befoor. Hoo's as nate an natty as hoo's nice, an evry day in th' wick as clean as a new pin. Th' best gawn as hoo hes for Sundays is made o' chep print; but I queshtun whether any lord's wife looks as weel in ather velvet or sattin. It's like as if her kluas took kindly to her, an clipt raund her as if they loved her. It would be nothink fort say as they met a bin made for. Of coorse they hev bin made for her. But it allus seems to me as if her kluas could think, an act, an tek sich a pride in her, that they'n hung on to her, an wun theirsels raund her, just in th' very way fort make folk fort look at her, an admire her.

Well, that's Polly Stockley!

Naw, will ye be surprist fort hear as last Valentine's day, Polly Stockley geet one o' thoos love tokens, as gus abaat at that time o'th' year? Well, hoo did, an a grand un it wus too. Haw mich it hed cost hoo couldn't think; nor wheer it hed come fro nather. Hoo'd no yung mon, an never hed. Nor hed hoo hed her thowts turnt towart any o' thoos as hoo knowd. Hoo wus under twenty, workt hard for th' biggest number of hours aat of evry twenty-four, an wus nearly as ignorant of her own good looks, as hoo wus innocent of any desire fort hev any yung mon comin a coortin her.

This Valentine comin wus a reglar startlin

event for Polly. Valentines didn't come through th' post, with directions on em, of their own acoord. Somebody must a sent this Valentine.

An whoey was this Valentine fro ?

That quesltun hed a wonderful quare effect on Polly. It took her breth at fost ! It must a come fro somb'dy as thowt a deal abaat her—fro somb'dy as would maybe be makin some excuse fort come to their haase an begin a keepin comp'ny with her.

When Polly's thowts hed gotten this for, nob'dy would a sed as her face would a bin improv't by hevvin a bit of colour in it. Why, her face an neck wus scarlet ! An as for shame, why, if hoo'd bin fond aat doin one o'th' wost things in th' world, hoo couldn't a lookt moor sham't on hersel.

An then it crope into her mind, as this Valentine met a come fro one or fro another yung mon as hoo knowd, as Polly wouldn't a took up with if hoo'd a bin fifty, an wus hevin her last chance. An then th' colour went fro her face an neck, an they wus so white, an evry feecher of that face wus set so firm, yo met a thowt it wus a marble statyew, a leinin agen that fireplace. It wus as plain as a pikestaff, when yo lookt at her, as theer wus yung men as met come, but they'd hev fort goo back as they coom.

Polly never hed hed any sakrits fro her mother, an hoo'd no thowt o' beginnin fort hev, so hoo showed her mother that Valentine, colourin up an then gooin white, an

colourin up an then gooin white agen, aw th' time as they wus lookin at, an tawkin o'er that Valentine.

"Hes to any noshun whoey's sent thee this?" axt her mother.

"N'ow, I hevn't, any moor than yo hev."

"Well," sed th' mother, "if theer's any yung mon as hes begun a thinkin abaat thee, tha'll find it aat in time. I reckon tha'll hev fort get marrit like other yung wimmin, an ift gets a likely chap, as seems as if he'd do weel for hissel an for thee, tha con do woss than get marrit, when t'gets a bit owder. But theer's no horry abaat it yet, wench, an for anythink as we known, th' mon as hes sent th' Valentine, may ne'er turn up hissel."

Naw, it would a bin a nasty wicked lie, for anybody t'a sed as Polly Stockley hed ever ather wantit a sweetheart or a husbant. Th' wench hed never hed any sich thowts in her head. An yet her heart gen a bit of a flutter, an theer wus summat very like disappointment abaat her, when her mother sed as th' chap as hed sent that Valentine met never turn up hissel. Th' thowts as hed come into her mind sin hoo took that Valentine fro th' postmon, wus preparin her, quite unknown to hersel, for enterin on Love's yung dreem.

I don't know whether anybody could a notist any difference with her or not, but after that Valentine hed coom, whenever Polly hed fort tek kluas whomm, or fort fotch em to th' wash, or fort goo aat for

any purpos, hoo seemt to hersel, an no daubt it raly wus so, fort be tremblin a bit, an summat freetent, an kind o' sham't of hersel like. When hoo geet back in th' haase, hoo felt like one as hed just geet aat o' some danger, baat knowin wheer th' danger wus, or who it met come fro.

But th' sakrit o' that Valentine wusn't one as wus lung kept.

Theer wus a family as lived abaat hafe-a-mile away, as hed hed some o' their washin done by Polly an her mother for monny a year. It wus a big family, an theer wus lots of sons an dowters in it. Polly yust fort tek their kluas whomm at th' wick's eend, an bein a favrit with th' mother o'th' family, yust fort often stop for a bit of a chat, after th' kluas hed bin examint an fond fort be reet, an hoo'd gotten paid for em.

Th' owdest son in this haase hed bin prentist to a blacksmith, an after he wus aat on his time he'd tekken a smithy, an setten up for hissel. He wus a fust-rate workmon, an jobs coom into him one after another, faster than he could get through em. He wus doin weel, an savin money at a rate as he ne'er expected, when he fust begun a hommerin on a anvil of his own.

Naw, this yung blacksmith hed often sin Polly comin to his mother's with kluas, an seein her, baat he'd bin blind—which would a bin rather botherin for a blacksmith, or anybody else, for that matter—he couldn't help notisin what a weel-bilt, tidy, modest

young woman hoo wus. An as he lookt at her, an thowt abaat her, th' noshun coom o'er him, as hoo wus th' one as he owt fort splice hissel to, if he could only manidge fort work hissel into favour. But th' moor he weighed her up, an thowt abaat her, th' chance of him gettin her for a wife seemt fort goo further an further off. When he thowt abaat her at his work, he'd poo at that pow as worked his bellis, hard enough fort a raist a hurricane in his fire. An when he pood th' hot iern aat, an sed to hissel as he'd find aat some way, or ger howd o' some excuse, for ather tawkin to Polly or her mother, th' way as his hommer coom dawn on th' iern on th' anvil, couldn't a bin b'yetten by nothink but steam.

An yet, strung blacksmith as he wus, with booun, an mussle, an strength, as couldn't be aquold nowheer raund th' country, whenever he did come near Polly, he couldn't oppen his maath, or say a word to her, if his life hed rested on it. An as wick by wick went o'er, he went woss an woss. 'Ihey sed awhomm as he wus killin hissel with work ; but it wusn't that.

Monny a time at neet, when he'd washt hissel, he made his mind up fort goo strait dawn to Mrs. Stockley, an tell her haw he felt abaat Polly. An he'd goo aat o'th' haase, lookin as determint as a mon could look, settin his feet dawn like a mon as would do what he intended doin, whatever coom agen it. But if yo'd a followt him, yo'd a sin haw his resolushun seemt fort



dribble aat on him, as he geet nearer an nearer to that bottle-neck passidge, as would a took him into th' coort as Polly lived in.

Th' neet as he showd th' moost corridge, he geet no further than wheer he could just ger a bit of a slantin look up th' bottle-neck.

He thowt th' world an aw of his mother, an if he hedn't, he'd ne'er a geet on with Polly Stockley. So when he fond as he hedn't pluck anough hissel fort ger on with any coortin, he towd his mother what it wus as wus botherin him.

Naw, his mother hed, for a lung time, made up her mind as no better luck could come to any lad of hers, than fort get Polly Stockley for a wife, so hoo wus rare an fain fort hear what th' lad hed fort tell her. Hoo made her son woss than he wus befoor, by singin Polly's praises in th' lauddest of ways, an sayin haw lucky he'd be if he could only get Polly for a wife.

"Why dusn't come into th' haase when hoo's here, an ger a tawkin with her?" his mother axt.

"I've tried, monny a time," he sed, "but when hoo's here, I'm tung-teed, an ditherin aw o'er."

"Then I'll tell thee what fort do as a start. It's Valentine time. Thee goo an buy a fost-rate Valentine, an send her that. It'll be a start, an that's aw tha needs. Send her a Valentine, I've a noshun as that'll leeud to summat."

Aw th' next day he wus thinkin abaat this noshun of his mother's of sendin Polly a Valentine, an by th' time as he left off work, he'd manidged fort screw his corridge up, an when he'd washt hissel, he went dawn th' tawn, an walkt reet into a shop wheer they sowd Valentines, withaat trustin hissel fort think o' what he wus gooin t'do. He bowt one o'th' best Valentines they hed in th' shop, an geet it made up reddy for sendin, an then went whomm fort put th' direction on it.

That Valentine wus directed an posted befoor his mother knowd as he'd took up with her noshun. But he towed her abaat it befoor he went t'bed. An hoo towed him fort keep up his sperits, for aw would come reet in th' eend.

An when Polly went to th' haase with th' next kluas as hed bin washt, hoo wus very near bein knockt o'er, by th' yung blacksmith's mother axin her whether hoo hedn't hed a Valentine fro someb'dy. An this led to th' mother tellin haw her lad felt towart Polly, an what a good lad he wus, an haw he wus gerrin on at his trade, an only wantit sich a wife as Polly would make, fort set him up, an make a mon on him.

An Polly seet on a cheer an listent; but who heerd hardly anythink gradely, an seemt fort tawk back baat knowin what hoo sed. At last hoo geet up an walkt off, an whether hoo as mich as sed "Good day," nob'dy ever knowd.

But th' yung blacksmith's mother was quite satisfied. Hoo'd bin in love hersel in her time, an hoo knowd haw it workt fro th' very start.

Polly ne'er took any moor kluas whomm to that haase, after th' tawk as hoo hed with th' yung mon's mother. But some haw or another, I think it wus after th' two mothers hed hed a tawk t'gether, th' yung blacksmith manidged, not only fort find his way up that bottle-neck, but he geet reet into th' haase wheer th' mangle wus, an monny a time sin his fost visit, when theer's bin a lot o' kluas fort be manglet, befoor th' day's work wus done, an Polly could sit dawn fort tawk with him, or goo aat for a walk with him, he's getten howd o'th' handle o' that mangle, an seet it gooin as fast as it would a gone, if they'd hed one o' thoos new fangelt gas inguns to it.

An when dun yo think they're t'be marrit? Why, this very Saint Valentine's Day, Eighteen Hunderd an Eighty. They'll be at th' church abaat ten o'clock; an if yo'd like fort see what sort of a mon Polly Stockley is marryin, or what sort of a yung woman that yung blacksmith is tekkin for a wife, be at th' church at that time, an yo'll see em both to th' best advantidge. An if yo don't jine in wishin em both lung life an happiness, yore ather a miserly owd batchelor, or a withert owd maid, with aw yore better feelins frozen aat on ye durin th' cowl weather we'n hed.

## AT TH' STREET CORNER.

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It's a good while naw, befoor yesterday, sin I put my kuat on after gerrin my dinner, an went for a skog to th' eend o'th' street. I'd hardly geet up to th' lot on em as regularly stands theer skoggin, befoor one an another on em, bost aat with,

"Wor a stranger! Haw is it ast hes begun o' comin aat agen in th' dinner haur? Hest gotten the writin done for this wick? or hest lost the job?"

Of coorse, I hed fort explain as it wus only th' fit as hed coom o'er me, fort turn aat an hev hafe an hour with em, as I yust fort hev in owd times, befoor I wus made into a newspaper sketchist.

We geet into th' owd ways o' tawkin abaat one thing an another, till I'd gotten to th' bottom o' my pipe, an wus knockin th' dust aat on it, when one on em said,

"Here, I say, Jack, fill the pipe naw aat o' my box. Its a new sort o' bacco as owd Whitehair, in th' Market-place, hes gotten howd on, at thrippunse an haunce. An rare an good bacco it is too, as tha'll say, after tha's pood at it a bit."

It would a bin unnaburly not fort a done as I wus axt, so I filled my pipe aat of his box, struck a leet, and startit of another smook. It wusn't bad smookin, I'll allow,

an I sed so at th' time, an this it wus, I dar say, as led one o'th' chaps fort say,

"Well, if it wus twice as good bacco as it is, he'd ne'er make anythink aat o' me by sellin it."

"Haw's that?" I axt.

"Becose I never smook bacco. I never do anythink so foolish as that."

"Dost tek snuff, then?" sed I.

"N'ow, I don't," sed he, "that would be moor foolish than smookin bacco."

"Didto ever try fort smook?"

"'Did I ever try fort smook?'" he sed, "I should think I did. I tried wonse, but that wus even a moor foolish thing fort do, than I did when I went into th' shop, an spent my threehapence on th' hafe haunce o' bacco. I didn't get hafe through a pipe on it, befoor I went to th' back o'th' haase, an partit with my dinner, an befoor I geet into th' haase agen, I'd a bin glad fort a partit with my head as asily as I'd partit with my dinner. When I geet on th' squab under th' window, I thowt I'd laid me dawn for th' last time, an should ne'er ger up a livin mon agen. N'ow, I've ne'er done anythink so foolish sin then, as fort lay my money aat on bacco."

"Tha wus a crazy foo for the pains," sed one o'th' chaps as wus standin theer.

"I know that as weel as tha does," sed this chap as didn't smook, "but I wus only a foo wonse, I've ne'er bin a foo sin."

"Tha's ne'er bin owt else," sed th' tother.  
"Ift hed gone on with it for abaat a wick,

tha'd a bin aw reet, an tha'd a bin injoyin the smook naw like th' rest o' folk."

"'If I'd a gone on with it for abaat a wick,' aye? I'd quite enough on it that afternoon, I con tell thee, fort satisfy me. I wouldn't buy twenty year's plesunt smookin, by hevin a wick, insted of a afternoon, like I hed on that squab."

"Well," sed another chap, tekkin his pipe in his hand, an spitting aat, "tha met do, an I think tha does do, moor foolish things than smookin bacco. Tha'll goo two or three neets evry wick, an sit thee dawn for two or three hours in a alehaase, an evry glass ast hes 'll cost thee th' price of hafe an haunce of bacco. Dostent think drinkin ale like that is woss than smookin."

"N'ow, I don't. If th' fost glass of ale as ever I drunk, hed sarvt me th' same as th' fost pipe I hed did, it would a bin th' last as weel as th' fost. But it didn't, tha sis, an that's th' difference. I reckon then, tha dusn't spend the money in alehaases."

"I don't," sed th' tother. "If I want a glass of ale, I hev it awhomm. I don't do anythink so foolish as fort goo into a public haase an ger it."

While this tawk hed bin gooin on, a stranger coom up, an axt one o'th' men if he'd gotten a match fort give him. Th' stranger struck th' match, an leeted his pipe, an stopt listenin to what wus gooin on. When he geet a chance he pinto to th' butcher's shop opposite, an sed,

"Naw, if evrybody wus like me, sich

chaps as thoos would never need fort tek their shutters dawn."

"Why," sed two or three of em, "done yo meen fort say as yo don't eight any butcher's meit?"

"I don't do anythink so foolish as that!" sed this stranger chap, in sich a seryus way, that we aw bost aat o' laffin. It seemt to us th' moost comikle thing we'd ever heerd on, fort a coom across a chap as wus to wise fort eight ather rost beef, or bylt beef, or legs o' mutton, or anythink else in th' butcher's line.

When th' laff wus o'er, one on em axt,

"Then if yo don't eight butcher's meit, what the hangment done yo live on? Bacon, or rappits, or chickens, or what? Yo caunt live baat eightin any moor than wa con."

"I'll tell ye th' prinsipel as I goo on," sed this strange chap as wus doin th' butchers. "It's this, I never eight anythink as hes hed life in it."

"Good Lord!" shaated one o'th' lot, lerrin his pipe drop aat on his maath on to th' flags, wheer it lee brokken, "but that's a crommer!"

"It's no crommer," sed th' stranger. "It's nowt but th' truth. Nowt as hes ever hed life in it, hes gone dawn my throat, as meit, for a duzzen year or moor."

"Well," sed a smart chap as wus in th' lot on us, "a kaw couldn't walk dawn yore throat, nor a rappit couldn't jump dawn, ut after they'n bin cookt, yo'n hetten em 1 peeces."

"Yore aat on it," sed th' stranger. "I've nather swallot anythink o'th' sort wick, nor hetten it in peeces, for th' time I've nam't."

"Then what i'th' world done yo caw yersel? Are yo a hextra strung red-neckt kauthlic, as hes fort keep Lent aw th' year raund, an live on sauted codfish?"

"I'm no kauthlick," sed th' stranger, "an I don't eight fish, becose fish hes hed life in em in th' waater, just as kaws, an sheep, an pigs, an rappits, an cocks, an hens, an ducks, hes on th' land. If yo want to know what I am, I'm a Veggytareun, an eight nothink that's ever hed any life in it."

"Well but, come, look here naw, fair doos!" sed one on em, "What is theer in it? Yo caunt live on nowt but pratus, an bread, an Indy corn, an pickelt unnyuns, red cabbitch an alliker, an buttermilk an thick porritch. Fair doos naw, if yo don't eight anythink as hes bin wick, let's know gradely wor it is as yo done eight."

"Well," sed this Veggytareun, "I eight veggytables of aw sorts; potatus, carrots, turnips, cabbitches, rice, sago, tappyoko, an I don't know what beside. Milk, an butter, an eggs, an cheese. Beuns, an peighs, an lentills. Why, I'm spylt with chise, and very near ruint by good livin! I've never hed a doctor sin I left off eightin annymuls, an I feel that strung in wind an limb, that I shouldn't be surprist if I lived fort be a hunderd or two, an aw through



livin on veggytables, an eightin nothink as hes ever hed life in it."

"By gum!" sed one as hed bin lisenin, "but I'd rather hev a beefstake table, than one o' yore veggytables any time. An as for livin fort be a hunderd or two, I'd raather not, if I hed nowt better fort chew than bylt cabbitch, an sich like, aw th' time."

"I say," axt another, "haw lung hes there bin any Veggytareuns in th' country? Are tha th' fost an only one? or is theer moor on o'?"

"Bless yer life theers thasands of us in th' country, an th' number's allus gettin moor. Folks are gettin moor sense than they yust hev. Th' time 'll come when theer'll not be sich a barbaryun in th' country, as th' mon as'll sit dawn an eight th' roasted flesh, an suck th' boouns, of a annymul."

"An haw lung done yo think it'll be befoor that time 'll come?" axt another as is known aw o'er th' tawn for th' twist as he teks with him to th' club dinner, o'th' fost Monday in August.

"It'll not be in aar time. But th' time will come. Folks are gettin to inleetent fort continue for monny generashuns hevin their dinners browt aat of slatter-haases."

"I'm glad fort hear as it'll not be in aar time," sed th' club dinnerer. "I don't get so mich butcher's meat as it is, but hang me if I should like fort give up th' bit as I do get."

"I'll tell yo what," sed another to th' stranger, "yo shouldn't caw yersel a Veggytareun, yo should caw yersel a Nebbukudnezzerite, becose Nebbukudnezzer, as Danyul tells abaat, wus th' fost mon as ever tried fort live on veggytables, but he soon gen o'er eightin dock leeuv's an grass, when he coom to his reet mind agen."

Just then yung Dapper wus walkin past, an one on em says,

"I say, Dapper, stop a bit, we'n gotten a Veggytareun here!"

Dapper did stop a bit, a very little bit, while he drawd hissel up as for fro th' graund as he could, an sed,

"I thowt evrybody knowd as I never did nowt so foolish as fort stop skoggin an janglin at th' corners o'th' streets!"

An with that he walkt hissel off, baat waitin fort hear what any on em would say to it.

"Well," I thowt to mysel, "I've gotten amung some wise men by turnin aat. I wonder whether it'll be catchin, an I'st goo whomm a deal clivverer than I wus when I turnt aat!"

Just then owd Hanky-Panky coom raund th' corner, fuddelt as yusual, an when he seed me, he geet aat as weel as he could,

"Heigh, Jack Brat-sha, hest gotten to th' corner agen. Tha'll stond sixpunse, waintent, for I'm cleun brokken."

I fond my time hed coom naw, so I sed to Hanky-Panky,

"I never do nowt so foolish as that!"

B B

an I walkt off in th' direction of whomm.  
When I geet theer, I'd a lung turn o'er  
in my mind of th' varyous kinds o' wisdom  
as hed crope up while I'd bin at th' street  
corner.



## TH' CHAMPYUN'S BELT.

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Th' story as I hev fort tell this wick, is abaat things as happent years an years sin, lung befoor theer wus any gray hairs amung mine, or for th' matter o' that, befoor th' whiskers hed begun o' showin a dacent crop. But I've heerd aw abaat it so often fro duzzens o' folk, that I hev'n't th' leest daubt abaat any part on it. It's as true, evry bit on it, as any o' thoos stories as I've written abaat folk as yo known as weel as I do mysel.

When Cheeun Back, as they yust fort caw Bill Hayes in thoos days, wus a yung mon, theer wus nather church nor chapel, nor mission room nor schoo, in that collier villidge as is abaat a mile an a hafe fro here. Theer wus folk in th' villidge as went o'th' Sunday mornin to th' tawn to a church or chapel, but th' moost on em ne'er went near any place o'th' sort, only when weddins, an chrisenins, an berryins, coom off. Theer wusn't above one in evry score as could read, and not one in a hunderd on em could write. Edjucation hed'nt bin took to em, an they hedn't run after it, so as may be imadgint, theer wusn't monny places in aw th' country wheer folk knowd less, an beleevt less, than they did in this villidge. They knowd no moor o'th' Bible,

or th' Histry o' England, than they knowd abaat th' folk as hed lived in th' villidge a hunderd year afoor em. Lads an wenches both, when they geet owd anough, an that yust fort meeun when they'd gotten eight or nine year owd, hed fort start o' workin at th' coal pit. Th' wenches hed fort ger into traasers, like th' lads, an goo dawn th' pit with em, an pull an thrutch at th' boxes o' coal, aw th' day o'er. Theer wus no Act o' Parlyment in thoos days, as took notiss o' childer an colliers. Nob'dy kar't whether th' childer could read an write, or whether they hed their growth stopt, an th' life knockt aat on em by pony's work, befoor they wus strung anough fort a whipt a top, or a jumpt o'er a skippin rope. When th' "gradely time" coom for th' colliers to start their work, which, in thoos days, wus fro two to three o'clock in th' morning, th' childer an th' grown up men, an th' yung men an wimmin, wus upo th' road on their way to th' coal pit. An when they geet to th' pit brew, they filled th' cages in coal pit kale, thoos as geet theer th' fost wus th' fost fort goo dawn. Theer wusn't any tawk in thoos days abaat "eight haurs work." Fro ten to twelve haurs wus th' time as they wus dawn. Th' money as they geet would be thowt to be next to nothink naw; but money went further amung colliers in thoos days, than it will naw.

I've sed theer wusn't ather church or chapel, mission room or schoo, in that

villidge. Nor theer wusn't a gallows in th' villidge; but that's not strange, becose it hes bin sed, as a gallows existin anywheer, is a greit proof that th' folk as hes a gallows, must a getten a good deel inleetent. Hawever, theer wus a place wheer theer wus a pinfowd, an wheer theer hed bin th' stocks for drunken folk. Th' pinfowd, hawever, hed aatived th' stocks. But whether th' stocks hed rotted away, or they'd bin pood up by some o' thoos as hed hed fort do their time in em, I never heerd. Two alehaases theer wus in th' villidge, an thees afforded aw th' edjucational an spirrityule advantidges as th' colliers, yung an owd, hed in their reitch. Of thees advantidges th' colliers availt theirsels in sich a way, as left no room for complainin on th' part o' thoos as kept th' haases. Th' haases wus pretty weel filled evry neet till abaat eight o'clock, an then thoos as hed fort be up at gradely time would be off. But on th' Setterday neets, an Sunday neets, an recknin days, th' alehaases wus chock full, an it took th' landlords aw their time, an aw their strength too, fort carry aat their rule, as aw th' feightin must be done aat-side. It wouldn't a bin thowt at aw respectable or dacent for a grown up collier, in thoos days, fort a gone whomm sober on th' neet o'th' recknin day. Th' wives an childer wouldn't a knowd what fort a made on it, if they'd hed th' husbant an th' faather comin whomm sober. They knowd very weel what they hed fort do when he

coom whomm in gradely fashun. They hed fort keep aat on his reitch, an if he wantit anythink fort eight, or anythink moor fort drink, fort see as he hed it, if they could ger it for him. Th' childer as didn't sleep in th' same room as him an his wife, met be sent t' bed befoor he coom whomm. But th' wife, an th' childer as slept in th' same room, hed fort stop dawn stairs till he'd gotten up, an till they could hear fro th' naise as he made as he'd gotten to sleepin.

Naw, this sort of a life for a woman an childer, wusn't a very plesunt sort of a one, as yo'll very likely think. But then, it wus th' life as they'd bin browt up to, an wus yust to. Th' husbant could ne'er remember his faather doin anythink different; an th' wife wus only doin what hoo'd knowd her own mother fort hev fort do. For what ather on em knowd, or for what their faathers an mothers knowd befoor em, theer wus coal pits, an recknin days, an Setturday neets, an Sunday neets, an drinkin, an feightin, an husbants peltin into their wives an childer, an wives waitin up for their husbants, an nossin cross childer, evrywheer, an in evry place in th' world. If they'd a bin axt what they coom in th' world for, an hed understood th' queshtun, they'd a sed as thoos wus th' very things as they'd bin born fort do. They knowd nothink abaat anythink else, as folk hed fort do in this world. An as for any other world as hed fort be entert

after this, why yo met as weel a tawkt to em abaat Yorksher, or Lankasher, or Lunnon, or sich aat-o'th'-way places as thoos, for what they'd a knowd abaat it.

It may seem strange to some folk, but its true for aw that, that if th' wives of th' colliers hed hed their husbants comin whomm sober evry neet, they'd not a knowd what fort a done with em. They'd only larnt haw fort manidge men as geet drunk pretty reglar, an they'd a bin aat o' their recknin evry way with chaps as neer geet drunk. Workin an drinkin, an rowin an feightin, wus what they'd bin yust to sin they could walk. Lots o' wimmin would neer a took up with a mon as hed neer show'd hissel monly anough fort get drunk an feight. Just as naw-a-days we'en getten standards, as they cawn em, as th' childer hes fort pass at th' schoo, befoor they'll let em leev an start o' workin, so drinkin an feightin wus th' very top standards as a collier, in thoos days, hed fort pass, befoor he could howd up his head befoor evrybody in that villidge.

Naw I'm a Churchman, I am. Strung for th' church. I caunt see why we should hev chapels of variyus sorts, when th' church is reddy an willin fort tek aw sorts in. But then theer's folk as doesn't think like me, an so theer is chapels up an dawn th' country, an I rekken theer will be lung after I'm done for. Theer wus chapels in th' country at th' time I'm writin abaat. An some o' thees chapel folk geet it into



their heads, as it would be a good thing fort goo to this villidge, an see if they couldn't start a bit of preitchin theer. So some on em went o'er one wick neet fort see whether they could ger a room, or a cottidge, or a barn, or anythink as would do for folk fort stand or sit in, while th' preitchin was gooin on. They was very mich surprist fort find as one o'th' chaps as kept a public haase, was quite willin fort let em hev his barn for their preitchin. He sed he'd put aw th' forms in as he could spare aat o'th' haase, an make evrythink as comfortabul as he could. Th' chapel folk thowt theer was a glorious openin for em, when a mon like that, as kept a public haase, seemt so anxshus for em t'come. But they fond aat befoor they left him, as he thowt preitchin was summat in th' Pilty Green showman style. He wantit fort know haw mich ale they'd want theirsels, while th' preitchin was gooin on, an whether they'd stop evry naw-an-agen while he went raund with a two-gallon can of ale. When he fond aat as they'd nather want any ale theirsels, nor hev any ale took raund while they was preitchin, he sed they met tek their show somewheer else, they shouldn't hev it in his barn.

However, a start was made in one o'th' cottidges, one Sunday afternoon. Theer was a greit crawd aatside o'th' place, an a greit naise too. Sometimes th' chaps as was prayin an preitchin could hardly hear theirsels speik. But it went quieter aatside

evrytime they raist a tune an begun a singin. Th' roughist in th' crawd tried fort keep quiet while th' singin went on. An evry naw an then one in th' crawd as could read would shaat out for em t' send a ballet or two aatside.

Th' chapel folk fond it hard work fort keep that preitchin up in th' villidge, but they kept at it, determint not fort be drove aat by aw th' rows an naises as wus made at th' window an th' door. After a time they geet howd of two or three colliers, as hed bin as rough and drunken as any o'th' lot. But th' preitchin and prayin made quite new men on em. They did what a collier hed ne'er bin knowd fort do befoor. They gen o'er cossin an swearin, an drinkin an feightin, an letherin their wives. They wouldn't goo into th' public haases, but insted they yust fort meet at one another's haases, an one on em as could read a bit, read chapters aat o'th' Bible, an him an th' tothers' tried fort pray a bit an preitch a bit.

Bill Hayes wus one o'th' lot. When he begun o' gooin to th' preitchin, he didn't know B fro a bull's foot. But he thowt he should like fort be able t' read th' Bible, an thoos books o' hymns as they sung aat on. So he startit o' larnin his A. B. C. He hedn't bin larnin above a year or so befoor he could spell his way along th' Testament nicely, an as he hed a cappitle good memry he soon larnt a greit number o' verses, as he coom aat with when they wus hevin

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their meetins t'gether, though he yust evry naw an agen fort give em some quare twists an turnins, as would hev astonisht a white-chokert parson.

Bill show'd sich reddyng of tung, an he'd sich a memry for th' Bible, that in two-thry year they made him into a reglar locle preitcher amung th' colliers. He yust fort tek his stand on a cheer agen a haase front, an preitch away to aw as would come near anough fort hear him. He never larnt any quality tawk. His words allus rowlt aat in a rough sort of a way. But then he yust fort stand befoor a rough lot, an if he'd a begun of apein any namby-pamby ways, they'd ne'er a stopt fort listen to him. As it wus, as I've been towld, he could tell thoos stories aat o'th' Bible in sich a way that one minit he hed a lot o' colliers with th' water runnin dawn their cheeks, an th' next minit they wus aw on em reddy fort to pitch up their caps an shaat, "Yu-ray."

By that time they'd getten a bit of a chapel bilt, an they'd startit a Sunday Schoo for th' childer. An what wus moor wonderful still theer wus some yung colliers in th' villidge as ne'er hed bin ather drunk or in a feight, an though th' owd loafers at th' public haases lookt dawn on thees yungsters, theer wus quite as monny moor folk as wouldn't give in as thees yung chaps wus disgracin theirsels, an would ne'er turn aat fort be any good. Th' villidge hed bin, an wus bein, awtert wonderful!

But I'm not writin a history o' this villidge,

nor a histry o' th' folk in it, nor even a histry o' Bill Hayes. I hev'n't time for any-thing o'th' sort, so I mon leev aat a deal as yo'd like to know, an ger on to what led me fort put at th' beginnin o' this wick's sketch, "Th' Champyun's Belt."

Bill Hayes hed gotten t' be a owd mon. It wus only naw an agen as he'd strength fort stand up an do any speikin. He wus gooin to th' tother country, an he knowd he met be cawd off any minit. Th' last Sunday as he wus alive, he sed he'd ne'er felt better nor strunger for years, an he should like fort goo to th' chapel an preitch to th' folk once moor, if th' chap as wus expectit fort come would let him. He geet dawn to th' chapel nicely, an gen aat th' hymns an pray'd. When he stood up fort give his text aat, th' owd chap straitent aat so as he hedn't done for years. He startit but wakely at th' fost, but he warmt up to his work, an he hed thoos collier men, an thoos collier men's wives, starin at him with greit, wonderin eyes, as wus naw blinded with tears, an then wip't dry, as they fairly shaated aat with jie as he tow'd em abaat th' saints in hev'n, or of th' love which th' Mester hed for em. When he geet toward th' eend his vice went waker, an his body stoop't moor o'er th' front o'th' pulpit, an it wus like as if it coom o'er him as that wus th' last time as he should ever be in th' pulpit. He axt em fort remember what sort of a place that villidge wus befoor th' chapel folk hed browt th' Bible among em.

He reminded em haw they'd hed th' mes-  
sidge delivert to em fro that pulpit for  
monny a year. Haw he'd delivert it his-  
sel, as weel as God hed gen him th' ability.  
An then, sed he,

"My time's o'er. Yo'll hear me no moor  
in this chapel. If my bein here agen would  
save o' fro hell, or carry o' to hev'n, it 'll  
never be. Th' only place as yo'll hear my  
vice agen 'll be when I rise up with a glorious  
body, fort tek my place amung thoos as hes  
coom aat of greit tribulashun, fort sing th'  
song of Moses and th' Lamb for ever.  
Thank God! I've fowt a good feight, I've  
finisht my coorse, an soon I'st be wheer th'  
champyun's belt 'll be buckelt on to me, an  
aw th' feightin 'll be o'er."

Th' moost o'th' folk hed lowert their  
heads while he wus sayin this, an monny  
on em wus yusin their hankychers. But  
some o' em hed kept their eyes on him, an  
sid haw, as he geet aat th' words "th' feightin  
'll be o'er," he hed fort howd on to th'  
pulpit fort keep fro fawin.

Two or three on em went up to him, an  
helpt fort carry him dawn. He wus carrit  
whomm on a arm cheer, an not only th' chapel  
folk, but aw th' villidge turnt aat befoor  
they'd gotten him theer. He didn't seem  
fort know anybody after they'd laid him  
dawn on th' bed. An only wonse, just befoor  
"th' feightin wus o'er," they could just  
make aat as he wus mutterin "Th' champy-  
un's belt; th' krawn o' glory!"

Leevin aat o' mind sich fowk as grave

diggers, coffin makers, an sich like, theer's not so monny folk as'll goo past a cottidge wheer th' blinds are aw dawn, an th' door shut, an evrythink quiet an aat o' sorts, withaat feelin a bit quare, an puttin their feet dawn with less naise, and stoppin tawkin or whistlin, if they happen fort be doin ather. Death has a terribly solum way with it with evrybody. It hes fort come to aw on us in turn, an when we find as its bin at work with someb'dy as we'en known, an bin i'th' habit o' meetin with or workin with, it seems fort a bin so near aarsels, that for a time, hawever we trien, we caunt awtogether shake off th' feelin o' dread as comes o'er us. It's with us then summat like it'll be with th' men in a regiment o' sogers when th' battle's on. Fort hev a mon shot dawn while he stands close to you, 'll tek his comrade's breth, an make his heart start o' thumpin, a deel moor than th' seet of twenty dead men as he know'd nowt abaat when they wus livin.

Th' day after wus "recknin Monday." Th' colliers wus aw playin em, but th' public haases wus empty. It wus like as if they couldn't think abaat drinkin ale, or gooin on in th' owd ways, while Bill lay deead in his cottidge. An when he wus berrit, on th' Thursday afternoon, nearly evry mon in th' villidge hed washt hissels as soon as he geet whomm fro' th' pit, an hed put on th' best kluas as he hed fort goo to Bill's funeral. An o'th' Sunday after, that chapel as Bill hed belung't to, wus

cromful of folk, an lots aatside as couldn't ger in. It lookt like as if by deein, he wus gooin fort make moor chapel folk than he'd a made if he'd liv'd a hunderd year. They didn't aw keep on gooin, but this could be sed, as a monny on em did, an some aat o'th' number wus men, an wimmen too, as nob'dy would ever hev expectit fort darken ather a church or a chapel door.

That villidge hes a church, an chapels too, naw, but whoey knows whether, if it hedn't bin for Bill Hayes, an men like him, as wus th' fost fort goo into th' Divvle's forist an bring th' trees dawn in their rough fashun, whether th' owd state o' things wouldn't a gone on to naw. I'm strung for th' Church, as I sed befoor. But I'm not one as 'll stand up an say as men like Bill Hayes, are mistekken, when, at th' eend of their lives, they goo aat expectin fort get th' Champyun's Belt.



## "I'M ONLY DOIN MY JEWTY."

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Theer's hardly anythink as is good, or noble, or grand, or fort be aimt at an followt up, as isn't yust by hippokrits, an cadgers, an foos, an bad uns of aw sorts, fort help em aat in appearin befoor th' world better than they are at th' bottom. Nowtyness, an vise, an hippokrisy, an chettin, an lyin, an evrythink as is bad, are doin hommdige to vurtiew, evry day in th' wick, an evry haur in th' day, by tryin fort look as little like theirsels, an as mich like vurtiew, as ever they con. If they'n no connekshun with vurtiew—and goodness knows they'n none—they'd like it t'be thowt they hed. An strange as it'll seem to some folk, this leeds me to th' beleef, that human nacher is a better kind of article, than theer's some would hev us fort think. If nowty, wicked, an bad folk, in order to carry aat their nowty, wicked, an bad eends, find as it helps em fort put on th' appeerunce of bein good, an morrul, an upreet, then it follows as plain as a pikestaff, as folk must hev sich regard for vurtiew an good livin, sich confidence in folk as is vurtiewus an good, that th' mon as is aw bad hissels, in his ways an his life, can tek em in as asy as anythink, if he's only a dacent hand at puttin on an appeerunce of bein good.



Naw, if theer wusn't sich a general likin an love for what's vurtiewus an good, it wouldn't be woth a hippokrit's while fort seem fort be what he wusn't. An so fro th' hommidge as vise pays to vurtiew, I've come to th' conclusion as it wouldn't be paid at aw, if it didn't anser th' purpus ; an as it couldn't anser th' purpus if folk generally hedn't moor regard for vurtiew than a monny preitchers, an morrulists, an good men would make aat.

Naw, theer's a word as is offen browt in by folk, as is allus reddy fort grind poor folk dawn, an get th' last hapenny aat on em as they lien, an that word's *jewty*. Whatever quare sort of transacshuns some folk are fond aat in, yo may bet th' kuat on yer back they'll uphowd em by makin aat as they're only doin their *jewty*.

A relashun o' mine, as lives a lung way fro here, wus tellin me a tale abaat a chap in his naborhood, as is a greit mon for doin his *jewty*. He's a chap as hes a greit monny cottidges of his own, an he collects a greit monny rents of cottidges as belongs to other folk. An aw thees cottidge rents he collects on a reglar rule of doin his *jewty*. His own rents he collects on th' rule of doin his *jewty* to hissels an his family, an th' tother rents he collects on a rule as is very like it, th' *jewty* he owes to thoos as implies him. Naw when any poor fellow gets aat of work, or hes a accident of some sort, or is laid up ill, so as he caunt pay his rent, this collectin chap begins to explain his

notions abaat jewty. Th' rent mon be paid, if they hen fort goo withaat meit, or fort pawn, or sell, th' moost on their things as they hen abaat em, or else they heern his sarmon abaat th' jewty as he owes to hissel an his family, or th' jewty as he owes to thoos as owns th' cottidges. An as safe as ever he brings aat his "jewty" to em, if they don't pay up befour th' wick's aat, th' baylis is on to em, an they're left withaat a bed fort lie on, or a three-legged stoo fort sit on. But this collectin chap says he isn't fort be blam't, becose he's only doin his jewty!

A few year sin, cottidges wus scarce for workin folk wheer this mon lives, an I wus towed it wus summat wonderful th' quare things as jewty made this chap do. He'd goo his raund on a Monday mornin, an in one street he'd start after this fashion, when he'd gotten th' wick's rent:—

"Th' rent 'll hev fort be four shillin insted of three an eightpunse next wick."

"Four shillin!" th' wife, or th' husbant, would say, "four shillin! Haw's that?"

"Well, other folk's gerrin four shillin for haases like this, an I shouldn't be doin my jewty, fort let my haases for less than other folk gets. It'll hev fort be four shillin."

An four shillin it hed fort be. Theer wus no gerrin o'er a chap as wus only doin his jewty.

An then in a while he'd hear tell as th' Locle Bord, or th' Corporashun, I don't know which it wus, wus gooin t'make th'

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folk as own't th' cottidges, fort put drains to em, an make dacent coseys to em, an work o' that sort. As soon as he heerd that, jewty wus on to him agen, an th' next Monday mornin he'd start o'th' tenants summat like this:—

“I'st hev fort raise th' rent to four an sixpunce next Monday.”

“Four an sixpunce!” th' tenant would say. “What mon th' rent be raist agen for?”

“Well, yo sin they're gooin t'make us drain th' property, an put a good cosey at th' front, an spend a lot o' money on th' places, an I shouldn't be doin my jewty if I wusn't fort charge for what we'st hev fort spend. Th' rent 'll hev fort be four an sixpunce, but then, when th' work's done, th' place 'll be woth above a shillin a wick moor.”

That would be tenpunce a wick of a rise on evry cottidge, as doin his jewty hed browt to him.

But jewty hedn't quite finisht with him, for when th' time coom as th' work wus a doin, he did his jewty agen one Monday mornin, by tellin aw his tenants in that street, that naw as th' work wus gooin on, th' rents would be raist th' next Monday to five shillin a wick.

Some on em sed they wouldn't pay it, an aw on em sed it wus a scandlus shame fort want fort make em pay five shillin. But aw as they could get aat on him wus, as he wus only doin his jewty, an nob'dy could be blam't for doin that.

Another chap as this relashun o' mine tow'd me abaat, wus very near as greit a mon for jewty, as th' one as I've bin tellin abaat. He wus a collector o' cottidge rents too, an th' inventer o'th' little game as is cawd "Swoppin th' Keighs." When a fellow wantit a haase, an couldn't find one as he lik't, aw as he hed fort do, wus fort goo to this chap, an drop five or seven shillin in his hand, an at th' next wick's eend any cottidge as he fixt his mind on would be emty for him. Th' owd tenants would hev fort bundle aat, whether they lik't it or not, or whether they'd anywheer fort goo to or not. This second chap yust fort put it a this way, as th' mon as didn't do his jewty to hissels was a foo, an he didn't want fort be seet dawn as one.

Naw, in thees cases, thees men only yust th' word jewty, becose they thowt it blinded folk a bit, an kept aat of seet summat as th' publick wouldn't like. They're like a lot of folk as I've coom across mysel, who, whenever they're doin, or gooin t'do, anythink mean, shabby, or cruel, or summat as would be better not done, they allus sen they're actin on prinsiple, an caunt help theirsels. Jewty, an prinsiple, an a lot moor words as yo'll remember yorsel, comes as reglarly aat o'th' maaths o' some men, as excuses for what they'n done, or are gooin t'do, as if they'd th' sole reet fort yuse em. An yet, aw th' time as they're tawkin so mich abaat em, nather jewty nor prinsiple would be strung enough fort stop em doin

one single thing as they'd set their mind on doin.

An this leeds me on till I seem fort understand haw it is as words changes their meenin so, till a word as wus a gradely good respectable word a hunderd year sin, an could be yust anywheer by anybody, caunt be yust in dacent company naw. Moor likely than not, hippokrits an raskils geet to yusein thees dacent words, fort help em in their nowty deeds, till folk forgeet th' good owd meenins as they hed, an coom fort look at em as only explainin th' bad yuses as they'd bin put to. That bein th' case, I shouldn't wonder if it coom to pass even in my time, as a mon 'll get six months for doin his jewty, an nowt less than pennle sarvitute for actin on prinsiple.

It would saund strange naw days for a policemon fort swear agen a mon in th' police kort, as hed sin th' prisner on sich a day, an in sich a place, doing his jewty. Or for a lot on em fort swear one after another as th' prisner in th' dock hed bin suspectit a lung time of actin on prinsiple, but till th' tother day, th' police hed never bin able fort get a case agen him. An it would seem strange to us, fort see th' madgistrates knittin their brews as th' police tow'd their tales, an lerrin it be sin as they'd make it as hot as they could for th' worthless scamp, as hed set hissels agen God's laws an men's laws, by doin his jewty, insted of living a honest an respectable life. In thoos days, "actin on prinsiple" cases

'll allus be sent to th' sizes, becose it'll be held as ordinary folk with common sense, 'll be able fort protect theirsels to a greit extent fro men as does their jewty, while it'll be considert awmost impossible for th' publick fort protect theirsels agen thoos polisht raskils as acts on prinsiple.

Things 'll be gooin on some time, befor sich a change as that is browt abaat, but it will come in somb'dy's days, if we're to hev moor an moor sham jewty, an sham prinsiple, knockin abaat. An we shall hev, unless folk as is baat ather, will come dawn on thees jewty men, an thees prinsiple men, different to what they done naw. It shouldn't be only raskils, an hippokrits, an sich like, as should tawk abaat jewty an prinsiple. Streitforrod an honest men should ger howd o'th' words an act up to em. An when they're bein put to bad yuses by bad men, they should let their temper ger up, an speik aat, an show th' fellows as is rappin up their nowty deeds in fine speeches, as they known em aw th' time to be th' knaves, an th' raskils, an th' hippokrits, as they raley are. If that was th' case, I dar say we shouldn't hear so mich abaat folk doin their jewty, an actin on prinsiple, as we done naw, but there'd be a deel moor of th' genuine articles fort be discovert by thoos as would tek th' trouble fort look for em.

## AATSIDE AN INSIDE.

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I don't know as I ever geet howd of a noshun as a clivver chap could make so mich aat on, as this as I've put at th' top of my paper this wick. Not bein a clivver chap, hawever, I'st hev fort bungle o'er it the best road I con. Why, in th' very fust place, its quite impossible for me fort tell haw for it carries me back, but I know this, as it teks me back hundredds, and maybe thasands of years, befoor it wus sed, as "th' evenin an th' mornin wus th' fust day;" an befoor th' time as "th' mornin stars sung t'gether, and th' Sons of God shaated for jie;" to th' very time when angils, as befoortime hed bin holy an perfect, ris in rebellyun agen their Lord, an fond theirsels aatside th' Heven as hed bin theirs, an inside of a place as fro that time to this, hes hed sich a karikter, that nob'dy's ever bin willin t'go theer, even for a short time, of their own accoord.

An then, haw it brings up aw we'en read an heerd, abaat th' comfortabul way th' fust couple, as ever went t'gether, was seet up in life in th' Gardin of Eden. Evrythink reddy to their hands, baat ather diggin, or delvin, or raking, or weedin, or plantin, or sowin. Things allus in sason, new pratus, green peighs, ripe strawbries, big goosbries,

veggytable marros, an collyflowers, aw th' year raund! An th' way natcheral histry could a bin studdid in that Garden is summat wonderful. No need for cages for th' lions, an tigers, an lepperds. They coom an lay dawn at Adam's feet like a cat will naw, or they run befoor him an then back to him, an danst abaat him, just like we sin dogs do. Ellefants, an kammils, an drummederries, an jiraffes, went dawn on their knees while he geet on their backs. But th' best of aw wus, that nather Adam nor his wife knowd what it wus fort hev unasy minds, or ailin bodies. Evrythink in em an abaat em wus "good," till that lyin sarpent, th' only thing of evil abaat th' place, perswaded th' woman fort hev a bite at that apple, an then hoo perswaded Adam, an th' eend coom! They'd bin inside, but they wus turnt aatside, an fro that time to this, gardenin's bin a very different thing to what we should a fond it, if Adam an his wife hed done as they owt to a done. Theer's one thing, hawever, as is very mich as it wus with Adam in th' Garden of Eden, an it hes bin so ever sin that unfortunate couple fond theirsels aatside, th' wimmin hev allus bin greit at perswadin th' men. True anough, they as often as not perswade em for their good, but perswade em they will, whether th' men wants it or not. An th' only way as I've bin able fort akaunt for em bein so determint in this perswadin work, is that they caunt get aat o' their minds th' greit injury as th' fost wife workt



aat for her husbant, an so they, her dowers, are tryin fort make some atonement to th' men, his sons, for th' greit injury as th' fost mon, an through him aw as followt, suffert fro th' thowtless folly of th' fost woman. Well, if this raly is th' motive as leeds wimmin fort be everlastinly tryin fort make th' men just do an say as they wanten em fort do an say, its not eggactly a bad un. But, as I've naw an agen sed to my owd woman, it's reet enough for em to try fort make th' loss up to us, as for as they con, but they should remember they're just as likely fort make a mistake as th' fost woman wus, an in just as mich danger fro that lyn owd sarpent as ever hoo wus. But my owd woman, an a deal of wimmin beside her too, seems fort be quite sure as they're a deel wiser than any number o' sarpents, ather owd or yung, an in th' matter of workin mischeef for th' men, it's their opinyun as they're moor harmless than th' moost innosent cupple of doves, as ever wus billin an cooin on one perch.

Naw, in some things, aatside's a deel better than inside. Ax a teetotaller which is th' best side of a public haase, an he'll soon tell yo as th' best side is aatside. Ax a fellow as hes bin in prison th' same queshtun, an th' anser 'll be th' same. Only in th' case of thees prison folk, th' quareist thing is, that hawever mich they'd sooner be aatside of a prison than in it, when they'n once bin inside, it's like as if theer wus no keepin em aatside at after,

they're forever doin summat as gets em sent back to their owd quaters.

An tawkin abaat th' aatside bein th' best side, will caw to yer mind a lot o' folk as yo'll know as looks a deel better aatside than inside. I've known men as wus th' best of good company away fro whomm. If yo met em at th' "Queen's Arms," or at th' "George," yo'd allus find em in th' jollyist of tempers. They'd stand drinks welly witha at any occashun, an let o' hev th' fust fill o' yer pipe fro their screws o' bacco, an ne'er put a bad face on it when they fond as as they'd only geet hafe a pipe left. They'd make ye split yer sides at th' things they'd come aat with, when they hed fort propose or rispond to a toast. They'd sing sich affectin love songs, as made ye think that at their own firesides they'd never be tiert of "beginnin their koortin agen" with their wives. This wus th' aatside on em ; or I darsay I should explain mesel better if I sed, it wus th' aatside appeerunce as they put on, when they let th' aatside world hev a look at em. Not aw thees jolly good fellows are only aatside show, but theer's a lot on em as would be took for quite different men, if th' companyuns as hes admir't em so mich, could only see haw they could carry on with their wives an childer. Naw, whether he con sing a song or he caunt ; whether he con make a speech or only stand on his legs lookin an feelin very like a foo ; whether he is or he isn't reddy fort stand drinks or bacco ; or whether he yuses

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nather one nor th' tother; that mon's th' rale, unadultratit, jolly good fellow, whose comin whomm agen makes his wife's eyes fort sparkle, an brings smiles on her face, an makes th' yungsters fort run fort see which 'll be th' fust fort clime on his knees! When th' wife an childer are never so happy as they are when th' "faather's" with em, yo may depend as that faather's a jolly good fellow, hawever he's thowt on by folk aatside his own door.

Theer's lots o' folk in th' world as would sooner hev th' aatside of their bodies drest off with th' latest fashuns, than they'd hev a strung healthy body in their kluas. Theer's men as is a thasand times moor pertikkler whether their kuats fit baat rinkles, an their trasers baat baggin, an their shirt front lies flat, an their necktee is th' reet colour, than they are abaat matters of plain jewty, which owt to never be off their minds till they'n bin lookt after. Theer's fellows as would goo wild if anybody wus fort see em in a shabby kuat, or one as lookt as if it hed bin made for someb'dy else, as con wear good kuats, an weel-fitin kuats, hafe a life time, baat ever bein sham't at not payin their tailors. It doesn't follow becose a chap's pertikkler to a hair in partin his hair dawn th' middle, an stiffinin th' mustash as he's so fond o' twirlin, as he's as careful an eggsact in his life, an his way, an his obligashuns. His hair an his mustash may be as nicely arrangt as if a barber wus allus lookin after em, while th' hair on

yore head, may be standin on eend, an yo may be pluckin yer beard aat by th' roots, through aggravashun at th' barefac'd way as he's bin doin ye. It waint make any difference to him, or put him aat th' leest bit, an if he wus fort speik plain, he'd say as it wus very foolish on yore part fort make sich a fuss abaat what yo couldn't help.

Evrybody knows haw th' wimmin folk makes th' inside suffer, fort bring th' aat-side into th' shape as fashun ses it mon be. Anybody as looks into a window wheer ladies' boots is showed, con hev a likely noshun of what th' wimmin as wears sich things 'll hev fort suffer. Their heels 'll be three or four inches above their toes, an aw th' weight o'th' body 'll be on th' toes. An yet th' very wimmin folk as 'll wear sich boots as thoos, 'll be redddy fort caw th' Chinese savages an barbареuns for screwin up their wimmin's feet in a different way. If th' Queen hed happent fort a hed club feet, it's my opinyun that only th' lowist an moost vulgar wimmin in th' country would a bin baat club feet at this present time. Club feet would a bin "worn" by th' wimmin, just as they wore hoops an bustles when they wus fashionable.

Bill Hayes, that villidge preitcher I tow'd ye abaat, did one of his biggist preichin doos abaat aatside an inside. Bill wus like a good monny better edjucated men, as hev fort stand up an tawk to folk; he could allus ger on better when th' chapel wus

full. It wus his turn one Sunday neet fort be in th' pulpit, an they kept comin in an comin in to th' chapel, till theer wus no moor sittin room, an a lot on em hed fort stand aw th' time. Th' chap as lookt after th' chapel hed fort goo aat an borrow some moor candlesticks, an leet moor candles, so as thoos as hed hymn books, could see th' print. When Bill geet up fort give aat th' fust hymn, an lookt raund him at that chapel, chockful, he'd ne'er felt so mich like preitchin befoor. Folk as hed coom fort hear him, could see it wus in him too. Th' singers sid it too, an feelin as they wus in for some good preitchin, tried their best fort hev some good singin to it; an whatever th' quality on it wus, theer wus both quantity an saund fort a satisfied anybody. When th' time coom, Bill begun abaat th' foolish an th' wise vurgins. Th' wise vurgins, he sed, hed their lamps trimm'd an leeted, an a good stock of ile. Th' foolish vurgins he'd their lamps leeted too, but when they wus aw wakened up by th' cries of th' bridegroom comin, thees fond aat as their lamps hed gone aat for want of ile, an while they wus lookin for ile, th' bridegroom coom an took th' wise vurgins into th' haase with him, an fastent th' door. Then, when th' foolish vurgins hed gotten some ile, they went to th' door an begun a knockin, but knock as they liked, they hed fort stop aatside. "Theer wus feastin, an rejiesin, inside. Fort be with th' bridegroom wus fort be in heven. Not fort be

with him, fort be aatside knockin at th' door, wus fort be in hell. That wus th' meeunin on it. He wus gooin fort speik plain to em, becose just as theer hed bin foolish vurgins an wise vurgins waitin for th' bridegroom, an th' wise wus took inside, an th' foolish kept aatside, just so wus theer in that chapel, some, as whenever th' bridegroom come would be fond waitin for him, an, through th' mercy of God, reddy for him. It wouldn't matter wheer they wus—in bed or aat, dawn th' pit, or in th' lones, ill for wicks an months, or kilt in a second, as soon as th' bridegroom coom, he'd hev his arms raund em, an carry em into th' everlastin manshun. Th' coalpit nast would aw be washt off em—th' coalpit kluas would aw be left beheend, an drest in new white shoots of kluas, they'd walk up an dawn th' heavenly country with Moses, an Job, an Peter, an Paul, an th' likes of thoos."

I've read in th' papers sometimes that theer's bin murmers o' approbashun at meetins wheer theer's bin speikin gooin on. Theer wusn't murmers of approbashun in that chapel, for they fairly shaated aat, did th' chapel folk, as Bill tow'd em what was comin to em.

But he went on fort tawk to thoos as, he sed, stood for th' foolish vurgins.

"Theer's one on o'," sed he, hafe bokin his finger towart a mon abaat th' middle o'th' chapel, "as should be dawn on his knees, thankin God as he's bin left aatside. Aatside? Aatside o' wheer? Wheer would

he a bin inside of naw, if that stone fro th' roof as broke his leg, hed only dropt on his body an kilt him." An then in a vice as seemt fort shake th' windows, an made a lot on em start on to their feet, he roart aat, "He's aatside of HELL, an he's inside of God's haase, an let evry one on us thank God for it." Hafe o' th' folk in th' chapel shaated aat, "Thank God," an th' chap as hed bin referd to, lookt as if he wus glad enough to be wheer he wus, though he yust in after days, when he'd jined th' chapel folk, fort say as Bill Hayes made that chapel as hot a place for him as ever he wanted t'be in.

As th' preitchin went on, Bill singelt aat a lot of men as hed bin browt to th' chapel aat of curiosity, an some on em for th' fust time. One o' thees hed never bin known fort be aat of a public haase on a Sunday neet befoor. Bill fixt his eye on this one, an sed,

"Theer's a mon here as makes me glad fort see him aatside to-neet. He's ne'er bin aatside of a beer haase or a jerry shop on a Sunday neet, sin he wus a lad befoor. Th' landlords are lookin aat for him, an th' divvle, as hes bin his mester so lung, is lookin aat for him. Th' jerry shop's unasy, an th' divvle's fretent lest he's lost his mon. An reet by his side as he sits before me, there's one o' God's good angils tellin him fort listen to what Bill Hayes hes fort say, an do both th' divvle an th' landlords o' one neet. When he gets aatside o' this

chapel, it'll be poo angil, poo divvle, with him. An if he lets th' divvle ger him into th' public haase to-neet its moor than likely that when hell's door is nailt fast he'll not be aatside."

This sort o' preitchin would'nt a done anywheer, but it did reel weel in that collier villidge. That chap hardly knowd haw he'd gotten into that chapel that neet. Quater of an haur befoor he wus inside, he'd no moor noshun o' gooin than any o' thoos as stopt away. But he wus in th' lane, an another mon as wus gooin axt him fort goo to, an he went. If that chap as axt him hed sed, "Come with me to th' chapel, an there'll come summat o'er thee as 'll neer let thee go into a public haase or a jerry shop again," he'd a turnt raund towart th' public haase sharp enough. An yet that wus just what happent to him. When he geet aatside o'th' chapel he fairly run whomm, for it seemt to him if he didn't, that pooin would begin between th' divvle an th' angil, an if th' divvle wus th' strung-ist it would be aw o'er with him.

Theer's a deel moor as could be wrote abaat aatside an inside, if I'd th' time fort keep on writin, an yo'd pashence fort keep on readin. But as I know my time's up, an hev a very strung noshun as yo've not very mich pashence left fort bestow on me, I'st bring this last one of my "Homely Sketches" to the eend of a drunkard.

But I'st hev fort explain that, I'm thinkin. Well, you sin I wus at a teetotal meetin



monny year sin, an theer wus a chap theer as made a tidy sort of a speech, but he finisht off rather quare summat like this:—  
“ Yes, my friends, the eend of a drunkard—the eend of a drunkard—shall come—the eend of a drunkard shall come—shall come to a—come to a—come to—shall come to a KONCLUSHUN.” Folk clapt their hands, an stampt their feet, when they fond aat what th’ eend of a drunkard raly would be. An I’ve bin tow’d monny a time sin I begun my newspaper writin as folk would be rare an glad if I’d give it up, as they wus quite tiert on me. So naw I’st sit me dawn quietly, an listen aat for th’ stampin an clappin as owt fort be gooin on naw as I’ve browt thees sketches to a konclushun.



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